

# Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment





**Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley**  
**Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment**

R004f\_2014\_Landscape and Visual Assessment

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**This Land Development Limited**

**23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022**

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Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1
- This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared by Leyton Place Limited on behalf of This Land Development Limited (the applicant) in respect of development at Land East of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley (the Site).
- 1.2
- Leyton Place Limited was commissioned to provide landscape and visual planning advice to the team in June 2020. The commission included (amongst other tasks):

- Undertaking baseline analysis pertinent to the landscape and visual context (desktop and fieldwork).
  - Visual Analysis – interpretation of data, Site view and photography.
  - Engagement with the appointed consultant team, and input to the development of the scheme to drive a landscape-led scheme.
  - Advice on policy matters.
  - Providing the necessary analysis to Inform the Development Parameters and Design Codes; and
  - Prepare this Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
- 1.3
- In addition, Leyton Place Limited has contributed to the evidence presented by the applicant at the Castle Point Local Plan examination (2021).
- 1.4
- The Site is centered on National Grid Reference TL 34930 00592 and is within the administrative boundary of Castle Point Borough Council (CPBC). The site area extends to 28.04ha. It was a preferred allocation for mixed-use development in the now withdrawn submission version of the Castle Point Local Plan 2018-2033, under Policy HO13 Land East of Rayleigh Road.
- 1.5
- An outline planning application, with access in detail (and all other matters reserved), is being made in the following manner:

- Access from Stadium Way
  - 455 dwellings (across 12.83ha)

- Provision of approximately 14.27ha of multifunctional open space (51% of the total site area)
  - Multi use community building
  - Land for a new health facility (up to 1,000 sqm)
  - Land for early years childcare center/nursery (0.13ha)
- 1.6
- Due to the outline nature of the scheme the assessment of effects is based on the land use and building height Parameter Plans which accompany the application. Fundamental to this assessment is the parameter plan relating to the provision and distribution of multifunctional green open space (**Appendix 1**) and the accompanying design intent as articulated in the DAS relating to specific aspects of the proposals, namely:

- **Land Use & Amount** - the building / Site use or uses proposed for the development & the maximum amount of development including the quantum of floorspace proposed for each use class, including flexibility across use classes;
  - **Scale of Development** - the maximum and minimum height limits for each development zone or building plot in relation to their surroundings; and
  - **Layout of Development** - the way in which development zones or building plots, routes and open spaces are provided, situated, and orientated in relation to each other.
- 1.7
- The purpose of this LVIA is to describe the landscape and visual baseline situation, set out the construction and operational impacts of the project, including mitigation measures.<sup>1</sup> and provide information regarding the likely consequences on the landscape and visual resources arising from the impacts identified and the significance of the resultant effects. This report also considers further mitigation measures that are not integrated within the development proposals.
- 1.8
- The objective of the assessment process has been to ensure that the analysis of the landscape and visual context (baseline situation) informs and guides the iterative design process. As noted at paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 in the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, third edition (GLVIA 3), the interrelated design and assessment process has

strength, as it links the analysis of environmental issues with steps to improve the siting, layout, and design of the scheme.

Scope of the assessment and consultation

- 1.9
- The project has been subject to a screening opinion. Whilst confirming that an EIA is not required the following comments regarding the landscape issues was summarised by the Council<sup>2</sup> as:

*“The proposal site exhibits a significant fall across the site which facilitates good views of local landmarks, as well as good areas of natural vegetation and features of local ecological and historical interest. These aspects of the landscape, whilst attractive, are of insufficient quality to elevate the site to one of national landscape significance, although the features identified are locally important. It is considered that the loss of these features would have an adverse impact on the landscape and whilst consideration of such loss does not, in the view of the Local Planning Authority necessitate EIA, the retention and/or the mitigation of such impact through the Master Plan process is considered essential.”*
- 1.10
- The Study Area for the project is shown on Figure 1.1 and has been informed by the Zone of Theoretical Visibility and fieldwork.
- 1.11
- With respect to the fieldwork, this was undertaken during the winter months 2020/2021. This assessment was finalised in November of 2022, however, despite some thinning to the woodland area to the north, there have been no changes to the landscape and visual environment which change the judgments contained herein.
- 1.12
- The glossary of terms is set out in **Appendix 3. Appendix 4** contains the bibliography.

<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this report there is a distinction in terminology between impacts - the action being taken, and effects - the result of that action.

<sup>2</sup> Application Reference 21/0380/SCREEN 06.05.2021

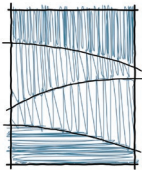






Figure 1.1: Study area

Methodology

- 1.13 This chapter has been written on the basis that the primary audience will be the determining authority and the statutory and non-statutory consultees. It is therefore assumed that the publicly available and published documents referred to within this LVIA, such as the landscape character assessments, will be familiar and available to the reader. Footnotes are provided to assist.
- 1.14 Throughout the assessment judgement, underpinned by the informed professional experience, is made on where the value, susceptibility, sensitivity, magnitude, and significance lie on a spectrum ranging from low to high. To assist the reader the 'grading' relating to the spectrum will refer to:
- A. Lowest end of the spectrum
  - B. Low/mid-spectrum
  - C. Mid-spectrum
  - D. Mid-spectrum/high end
  - E. Highest end of the spectrum

- 1.15 This 'threshold-free' approach is adopted because the definitions and criteria used in determining thresholds may either be limited to using the threshold to define itself, e.g. a High sensitivity relates to a high value and high quality and medium sensitivity is medium value and medium quality etc. which in turn needs definition as to what is high and how this is differentiated from medium; or the criteria are described in absolute terms such as change being large scale, with effects over a wide geographic area and total loss of contributory components, when in fact there may be a large scale change but only experienced locally with a moderate change to components. The spectrums used in this assessment are set out in each relevant section and explain where the low and high points are and possible factors in their determination. Professional judgement is then made as to the subtleties and variation in the combined factors.
- 1.16 The author of this LVIA visited the Site in the summer of 2020 and spring of 2021. A professional landscape photographer and surveyor visited the viewpoints to take the winter day-time images which are included in this assessment.
- 1.17 This LVIA considers the inter-related but distinct issues of the effects on the landscape, its character and resources and the visual amenity of people.

Baseline analysis

- 1.18 The starting point of the process is to understand the 'Baseline Situation' in respect of the landscape and visual environment against which any changes are assessed. The contextual analysis considers the physical and perceptual aspect of the landscape and the value attached to it, the views from where the changes are visible, and the people affected.
- 1.19 The description of the established context has been derived from:
- A review of published material, particularly in respect of Landscape Character Assessments (See Appendix 3: Bibliography);
  - Consideration of the planning policy context (as related to the assessment process<sup>3</sup>);

- Zone of Theoretical Visibility Mapping;
- Review of historic maps and images available online;
- Consideration of current mapping (plan and digital) and aerial photography; and
- Observations made in the field.

- 1.20 The viewpoints which form the basis of the visual analysis in this assessment have been determined by reference to the mapping shown on the Zone of Theoretical Visibility and subsequently verified in the field.

Sensitivity of resources and receptor

- 1.21 Having determined the baseline situation against which the effects of the development are measured, the sensitivity of the landscape and visual resources to the change is considered and classified. This considers the value of the resource and the susceptibility to accommodate the proposed changes.

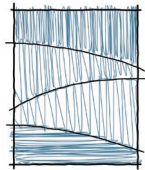
Consideration of the development

- 1.22 The assessment process then considers the **Development Inherent Mitigation Measures** (Section 4) so that the magnitude of the change can be described and assigned.
- 1.23 Throughout the assessment a subjective judgement, underpinned by an informed professional judgement and experience, is made on where the sensitivity of receptors or magnitude of changes lies on a spectrum from low to high. The landscape issues raised by the Council have been included in this assessment (**Appendix 2**)
- 1.24 The narrative which supports the conclusion drawn is provided to explain the rationale of the assessor.

Assessment of effects

- 1.25 The **Assessment of Effects** (Section 6) is a function of the sensitivity of each receptor and the magnitude change which has occurred. It is important to acknowledge that GLVIA, paragraph 3.33, recognises that it is not essential to establish a series of thresholds of different levels of significance. The simple point is to make clear judgements as to whether the effects are significant or not significant. Notably the word 'harm' is not contained in the GLVIA, any judgements on 'harm' are

<sup>3</sup> IEMA – Impact Assessment Outlook Journal, Volume 11: October 2021. The relationship between planning policy and LVIA (Paul Macrae and Edward White)





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planning judgements and would be addressed in the appropriate forum.

## Context to this assessment

### Planning context

- 1.26 The GLVIA 3 does not require that an assessment of planning policies be a component of the LVIA process. The assessment of landscape and visual effects is prepared independently of the planning considerations which are made based on merit, compliance, and balance by the determining authority. However, it is recognised that designations and policies may provide an indication of the 'value' of landscape and visual assets.
- 1.27 In this context, a review of the local landscape and townscape designations has not identified any 'valued' or protected Sites within the Study Area.
- 1.28 Through the Local Plan process the Site was being considered for removal from the Green Belt and to be allocated for mixed-use development, Policy HO13. The draft policy required a number of deliverables. On the basis of these matters the masterplan was progressed:

#### *Local Policy HO13 Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley*

*1. Land east of Rayleigh Road, Hadleigh, as identified on the Policies Map, is allocated for residential purposes, to deliver around 455 new homes by 2033.*

*2. A master plan approach to this Site will be taken to ensure that the development is attractively designed, contributing to environmental quality, and that infrastructure is provided to support growth in this location. The master plan must deliver the following:*

*a. Access arrangements for the Site, which also addresses peak time congestion at nearby junctions;*

*b. An urban design framework using a mix of urban design approaches built around the Arcadia approach in areas located within the Historic Natural Landscape and in the vicinity of important landscape features, and the Boulevard and Major Entry Point approaches, to create an attractive green, parkland environment, integrated into the existing landscape and topography;*

*c. Respects and retains as far as possible the hedge and tree-lined boundaries established;*

*d. An approach to wildlife that results in a net gain in biodiversity;*

*e. The provision of greenways through the Site, linking to the existing network of green infrastructure;*

*f. An increase in public open space provision across the Site consistent with the requirement of policy HS3, delivering additional accessible natural green space and children's play equipment;*

*g. Sustainable drainage measures will be implemented to ensure no increase in the risk of surface water flooding to the Site or nearby properties;*

*h. The provision of a multi-use community building on Site;*

*i. Land (circa 0.13 hectares) for a stand-alone early years and childcare nursery; and*

*j. Main vehicular access will be taken from Stadium Way in the north and Daws Heath Road in the south.*

*3. Detailed design proposals for the Site must have regard to the Council's Residential Design Guidance.*

*4. Public transport waiting facilities and services must be improved on Rayleigh Road and Daws Heath Road.*

## Credentials of assessor

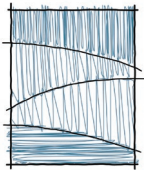
- 1.29 This LVIA has been prepared by a Fellow of the Landscape Institute (FLI) with more than 30 years professional experience in the field of landscape planning. The assessor has a BSc (Hons) degree in Landscape Management from the University of Reading, a Post Graduate diploma in Landscape Architecture, she achieved chartered status with the LI in 1991.
- 1.30 The assessor has prepared more than 100 LVIA's in her career and has appeared at more than 70 planning inquiries as an expert witness on Landscape and Visual matters. Her approach to assessing landscape and visual effects has been subject to scrutiny by her peers and the planning inspectorate.

## Collaboration in the design process

- 1.31 The author has engaged with the client team, in particular with those with specific and relevant technical inputs, including:
- Masterplanning
  - Heritage
  - Ecology and Arboriculture
  - Hydrology
- 1.32 In respect of the planning elements of the project, the LVIA reflects the advice provided by the client's appointed consultant CODE.
- 1.33 The applicant engaged with members of the Council's planning team in the development of the proposals.
- 1.34 Leyton Place Limited commissioned Troopers Hill Limited to run the ZTV mapping and take the necessary photography in accordance with the LI's technical guidance.

## Limitations

- 1.35 Apart from the Application Site itself, no access to private land or property was obtained during the assessment.
- 1.36 Cumulative landscape and visual effects do not form a component of this chapter on the following basis:
- The Council has not identified any projects which need to be considered cumulatively in respect of potential landscape and visual effects; and
  - There are no other projects (the subject of a valid planning application) yet to be determined.
- 1.37 In terms of the private views, access to the site has provided sufficient information for the assessment process.
- 1.38 The remainder of this Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is structured as follows:
- Section 2:** Baseline Situation
- Section 3:** Evaluation of Resources and Receptors
- Section 4:** Design Evolution and Mitigation Measures
- Section 5:** Magnitude of Change
- Section 6:** Assessment of Effects
- Section 7:** Summary





Section 2: Baseline situation

2.1 The *European Landscape Convention – A Framework for Implementation*, October 2007<sup>4</sup>, contains the short definition of ‘landscape’ and provides supporting text at paragraph 1.2. The ELC definition is short, yet comprehensive, namely:

“ ‘landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors’ The definition applies to the whole territory of states including all urban and peri-urban landscapes, towns, villages and rural areas, the coast, and inland areas. It applies to ordinary or even degraded landscape as well as those area that are outstanding or protected.”

2.2 This interpretation is embedded in *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, (GLVIA 3, paragraph 2.3).

2.3 Landscape character assessments are typically limited to the ‘landscape’ beyond the settlement boundaries. By their nature they describe and reference undeveloped landscapes and tend to understate the inter-relationship of townscape and landscape on settlement edges.

2.4 This is noted in the Landscape Institute’s Technical Information Note (TIN) 05/2017, revised April 2018 (paragraph 2.4 and 2.5):

“A townscape character assessment may present a description of the townscape that is distinctive to that place, supported by materials such as maps, illustrations, and photographs. It can provide an understanding of how a place has evolved and developed over time to respond to natural, social, and economic drivers, and how this is reflected in the layout of streets, the architecture of buildings and the materials used. Historic Area Assessments may also be used to inform the historic environment aspects of the townscape character assessment.

This understanding of the intrinsic character and qualities of the place can then be used to guide the location, design,

scale, massing, and type of development that can be accommodated, such as public realm improvements, new buildings, or an urban park. A townscape character assessment can also form the basis for assessing the effects of change, to help decision-takers decide whether a new development is appropriate in its context, for example.”

2.5 There is no ‘townscape’ analysis in the material published by the Council and to avoid duplication of analysis Leyton Place Limited has adopted the townscape characterisation as contained in the DAS.

2.6 This LVIA recognises that landscape and visual effects need to be considered separately, however the character of the landscape has aesthetic aspects which are experienced visually, this is acknowledged, as appropriate.

Landscape character

2.7 Landscape Characterisation is the process whereby areas are identified and classified into distinct, recognisable, and consistent patterns of elements and features. This is a value-free process and does not provide for comparison of areas being ‘better’ than others. The determination of ‘value’ primarily comes through the process of determining and applying designations, policies, or local expressions of value.

2.8 Published characterisations cascade from the National Character Areas (NCA), prepared by Natural England, though to regional and local Landscape Character Areas (LCA) and Landscape Character Types (LCT) prepared by County and District Councils. Typically, the smaller scale, local assessment is most relevant to small-scale projects.

2.9 Landscape Character Assessments typically classify and describe the countryside beyond settlement boundaries, sometimes referencing the presence of settlements. As a result, the descriptions do not take into account or focus on the character of the peri-urban areas or specific townscapes.

2.10 In the case of the Application Site the most relevant published characterisation is the Green Belt Landscape Assessment, 2010, albeit this is now 11 years old and was produced with a

specific remit to provide information regarding the sensitivity of different landscape areas within the Green Belt to accommodate development. It is presumed that the reference to Green Belt relates to the scope and extent of the assessment coverage, as opposed to an assessment of the Green Belt purposes.

National scale

2.11 At a national scale, the Site falls within the broad area classified as National Character Area (NCA) 111 Northern Thames Basin. The classification and subsequent description relate to an extensive area, as a result the commentary does not assist with the understanding of site specific issues, albeit it provides context to the smaller scale assessments.

Regional scale

2.12 Within the *Essex Landscape Character Assessment*<sup>5</sup> the Site sits within the area classified as G3 **South Essex Coastal Towns**. Similarly, the description is broad and summarises the key characteristics of a broad area dominated by the urban environment. The context to these classifications is shown on Figure 2.1.

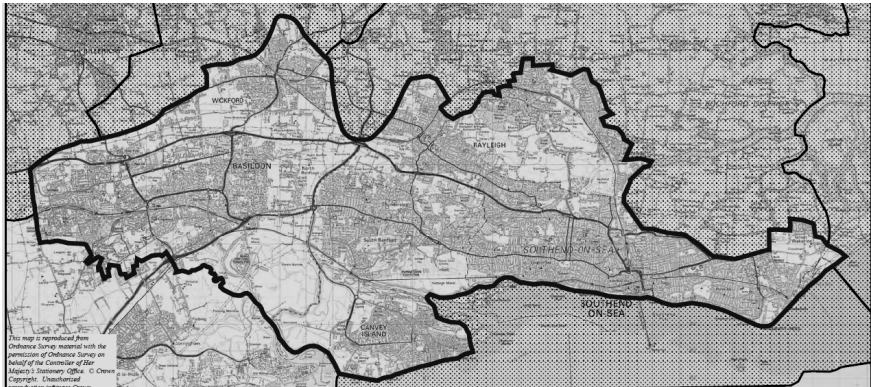


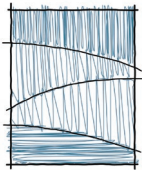
Figure 2.1: Extract from Essex landscape character area to show the extent of the South Essex Coastal Towns LCA

2.13 The overall character is described as:

“...an area of very mixed character, but unified by the overall dominance of urban development, with frequent views of an urban skyline. The major towns spread over gently undulating or flat land, but locally extend over prominent ridgelines and hillsides as well. A distinctive steep sided south facing

<sup>4</sup> Although the UK has left the EU the definitions are still valid and relevant to the LVIA process.

<sup>5</sup> Essex & Southend-on-Sea Replacement Structure Plan Review – Essex Landscape Character Assessment, Final Report 2003.





*escarpment between Hadleigh and Basildon retains significant areas of open grassland, as well as a patchwork of small woods, including woods on former plotlands and small pastures. Contrasting flat coastal grazing marsh lies to the south. In some parts such as south of Hadleigh, and around Hockley, the urban form is softened by very large woodlands and the Roach Valley is largely undeveloped."*

2.14 In terms of the Site the most relevant 'attribute' of this landscape character area is the role of open areas and woodland in breaking up the urban form. Larger fields have resulted from the loss of hedgerows and enlargement to accommodate agricultural management.

2.15 The pressures on the landscape are recorded as:

*"The area has been subject to very significant change in the 20th Century, with massive expansion of urban areas, and urban development pressure is likely to be a significant ongoing trend.*

*Areas where traditional landscape character survives well, such as the Upper Roach Valley, the Crouch Valley, the Thames Marshes, Langdon Hills and Dunton Ridges need particular protection from landscape or development change.*

*Recreational pressures are also likely to be considerable."*

2.16 In the consideration of development (exceeding 5ha) the following sensitivities are recorded in the *Essex Landscape Character Assessment* resulting in a **moderate** landscape sensitivity overall:

- Integrity of woodland and hedgerow pastures
- Coalescence
- Presence and integrity of major green spaces
- Poor condition of some arable farmland.

2.17 The recommendation is that new development should include strong new woodland/hedgerow framework, particularly where arable farmland is in poor condition.

**Borough scale**

2.18 At a more local scale Essex Landscape Design were commissioned by Castle Point Borough Council to undertake a *Green Belt Landscape Assessment*. This was published in 2010 and specifically sought to provide information on the sensitivity of different landscapes within the Green Belt to accommodate development.

2.19 Within this assessment the Site falls within **Area 4**<sup>6</sup>. Unlike the regional scale classification this only describes the landscape beyond the settlement edge (Figure 2.3) and therefore presents a distinctly 'rural' impression of the landscape focusing on field pattern topography and the 'attractive' elements.



Figure 2.2: Extract from *Green Belt Landscape Assessment, 2010*

2.20 Critically, the assessment repeats a statement from the Essex County Council 2007 Historic Landscape Characterisation that 'there are no settlements within the zone', but that it is bounded

by Hadleigh and Thundersley. The Zone in the HLC is larger than 'Area 4'.

2.21 Given the size of Area 4, and the presence of the urban area it is unsurprising that no smaller settlement sits within the 'zone'. Any development will inevitably be an extension to the exiting urban edge. The zone is clearly defined, contained, and influenced by the urban area. It is not appreciated or experienced in isolation. This assessment does not provide recommendations or guidelines for the management of change or accommodation of development.

2.22 The characteristic elements of this 'Area' are listed as:

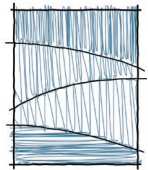
- The topography is rolling with small valleys. It contains areas of pasture, woodland, and hedgerows with field boundary trees.
- The field pattern is generally fairly small scale, and the land is well managed for grazing.
- The landscape is very attractive due to the individual elements and the contrasts. The rolling landform and well vegetated field boundaries are key elements of its landscape character.
- There are attractive views within the area and looking into the area from surrounding roads and other viewpoints. The industrial estate on the northern edge is reasonably well screened and set below the high ground in views from the south. The area is very attractive in views from Daws Heath Road.

2.23 The analysis in 2010 concluded that the Landscape Sensitivity of Area 4 is HIGH, which is defined as:

*"A landscape/townscape with limited ability to accommodate change because such change would lead to some loss of valuable features or elements, resulting in a significant loss of character and quality."*

2.24 Notably and notwithstanding this conclusion, the Site was a draft allocation for development in the emerging Local Plan.

<sup>6</sup> The Site forms the northern part of Area 4.





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- 2.25 The landscape factors<sup>7</sup> identified as contributing to the high sensitivity were (with LVIA author's commentary):
- **Substantial area of ancient woodland and small-scale pasture** – The ancient woodland is outside and to the south of the Site. The intensification of agricultural operations within the land holding have enlarged the field pattern and results in the absence of small-scale pastures.
  - **Woodland boundary banks and ancient pattern of field enclosure contribute to the strong character of the area** There are few historic remnants of the ancient field pattern within the Site (See Figure 2.3 and Figure 2.4). Some enclosed green lanes are present on the edge of the Site.
  - The rolling topography and small scale pasture in the northern portion of Area 4, contrasts with the enclosed ancient woodland to the south and contributes to the setting of the nature reserve. - The loss of the small-scale field pattern has not been noted in the assessment and therefore the contrast is in fact a result of the open rolling character. Whether the land is a setting to the nature reserve is not a matter of aesthetics.
  - **The landscape is well managed for grazing and informal recreation and nature conservation** – These conclusions do not apply to the Site; it is arable farmland which experiences trespass and has limited ecological value in its current form.



Figure 2.3: Extract from © Google earth 2018 aerial photography

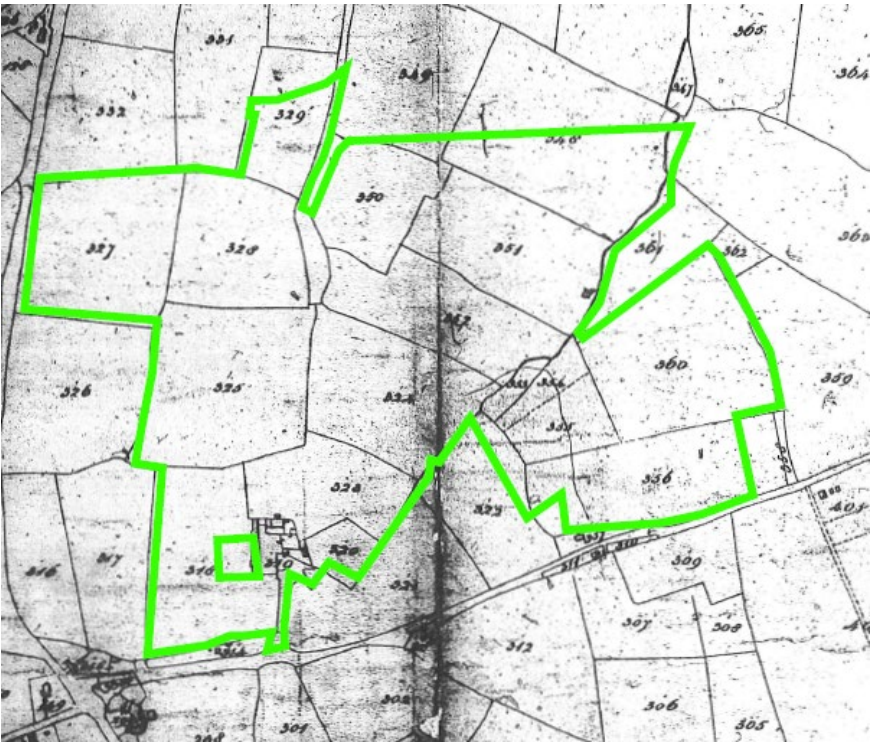


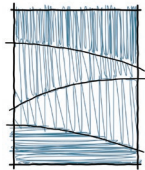
Figure 2.4: Extract from 1838 Thundersley parish tithe map

- 2.26 Overall, the landscape context of the Site has undergone a number of changes; through the expansion of the adjoining settlements, and intensification of agricultural management. These actions have resulted in the loss of vegetative cover and hedgerows and an erosion of the rural qualities of the landscape.
- 2.27 For the purposes of this LVIA, it is considered that the Green Belt Landscape Character analysis is not of a sufficiently fine grain for consideration of Site specific issues, as it amalgamates the distinctly wooded areas of ancient woodland with the intensely managed farmland. This ultimately skews the results for the Site, based on the higher sensitivities and more intact landscapes to the south of Area 4, beyond the red line.
- 2.28 Finally, although not a landscape character assessment, The Essex Wildlife Trust have prepared a visioning document (2010) to support the work being undertaken to deliver the Hadleigh and Daws Heath Complex living landscape (subject to **Policy NE2**). The principal aim being the delivery of a strategy to benefit the wildlife and local community through ecological enhancement and recreational management. Pertinent to the Site is the objective to create woodland and plant hedgerows connecting to the network of ancient woodlands and wildlife Sites. This document is considered in more detail in the Ecological Assessment prepared by SES.

## Site specific character

- 2.29 The Site is located on the edge of the urban areas of Thundersley and Rayleigh. The developed context comprises residential, commercial, and retail areas. The variation in townscape components results in a mixed character dominated by larger scale retail and commercial 'sheds' to the north and smaller garden residential and domestic scale development to the west and south. The townscape is fine grain and strongly enclosed.
- 2.30 To the east there is a sense of the character transitioning, from the urban area to wooded landscape dominates the context. The wooded landscape to the east is intimate and enclosed.
- 2.31 The most notable aspect of the Site is the landform. This can be differentiated into two parts. The elevated and relatively flat land

<sup>7</sup> The Factors listed are 1. Natural, 2. Cultural, 3. Aesthetic and 4. Quality/Condition





# Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

to the south and west at approximately 77m AOD gently falling to 60m AOD and the sloping land to the east falling relatively steeply from 75m AOD to 50m AOD.

- 2.32 The scale of the landscape is large with a simple and uniform character. Some remnant hedgerows provide a degree of localised containment, however, as seen on Figure 2.3 most of the Site is currently 'open' as a result of the intensification of the agricultural land management and historic loss of hedgerows.
- 2.33 The south and south eastern portions comprise a number of paddocks and small pastures defined by a series of mature hedgerows. In these areas there are several connected green lanes (Figure 2.5). Tree cover is restricted to retained and remnant hedge lines. These do create an intimate and relatively tranquil component to the landscape.

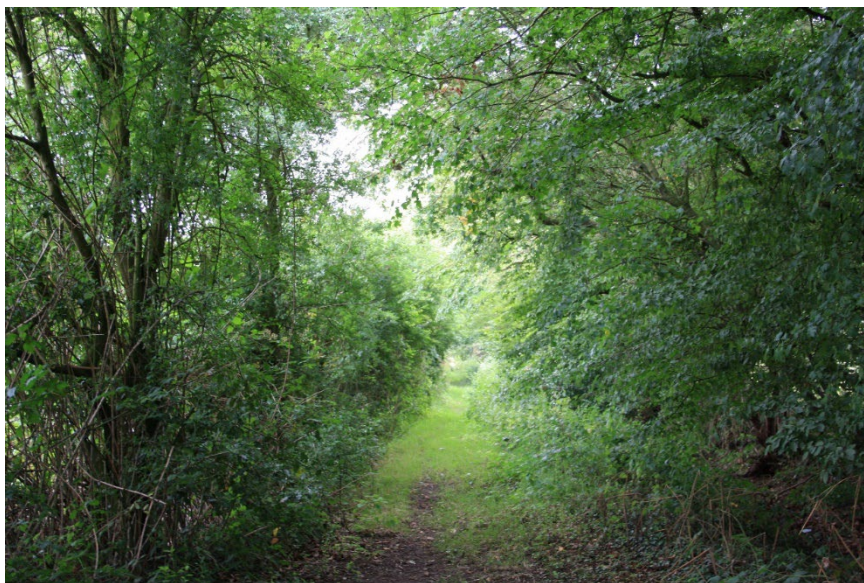


Figure 2.5: Green Lane within the Site

- 2.34 Along the boundary with the residential areas on Asquith Gardens, Firfield Road and Daws Heath Road the vegetation is intermittent with a mix of native and ornamental trees and shrubs.
- 2.35 Overall, the Site is situated in a peri-urban location and has a character and appearance consistent with the peri-urban

qualities of this settlement edge location. The existing townscape is evident and has a strong influence over the Site. The eastern portion is more 'rural' in character and connects with the off-Site wildlife areas.

## Landscape features

- 2.36 Water features, such as ditches and the man-made fishing lake, are located to the east of the Site in the lower-lying areas. These have a number of functions in terms of water management, provision of diverse ecological habitats and a recreational resource for the local community.
- 2.37 Trees and hedgerows are present, in differing degrees of quality and quantity, these are considered in detail in the Arboricultural Assessment prepared by SES. In respect of the landscape character these features determine the degree of enclosure and the affect the balance of 'urban' and 'rural' qualities.
- 2.38 There is no permitted public access into the Site. A Public Right of Way (909m in length) runs to the south and rear of development on Stadium Way continuing along the field boundary to the east (PROW BENF\_7<sup>9</sup>). Chain link fencing is present to prevent access into the agricultural farmland. Access to the fishing lake and equestrian facilities is allowing allowed for those with authorization to entre by way of membership/agreement. From field observations the public have created routes into the Site from neighbouring roads and paths and created informal routes within the fields by way of trespass.
- 2.39 Generally, the landscape of the Site has a distinctly edge of settlement sense of place (peri-urban). Whilst this diminishes to the east, the visibility of and disturbance generated by the urban infrastructure and associated traffic pervades the area affecting the appreciation and appearance of those more 'countryside' areas, this maintains an urban context to the landscape. The levels of tranquility are low, in that there is a constant 'hum' of activity and visual disruption from the commercial and retail development.

- 2.40 From the analysis of the published material and field observations, are a number of opportunities to enhance the landscape features of the Site, incorporating hedgerow restoration and linking green lanes and connecting points of access and enhancing the recreation linkages. This is discussed in more detail below.

## Visual character and views

### Extent of visual envelope

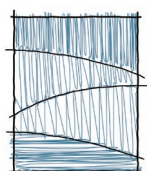
- 2.41 The analysis of views relates to more than what is visible and the appreciation of the apparent character of the landscape. To assist illustrations are contained within this report to highlight the composition and character of views and the visual experience, distinct from the appearance illustrated by the photographic material.
- 2.42 The area from within which people are likely to experience a visual change has been mapped to create a Zone of Theoretical Visibility<sup>9</sup> (ZTV, 7). Fieldwork has enabled the assessor to; confirm that the ZTV is a fair representation of extent of the Visual Envelope and identify the representative viewpoints<sup>10</sup> (Figure 2.8) which form the basis of the assessment contained within this LVIA.
- 2.43 The key elements in the landscape which limit the extent of the Visual Envelope are the:
- The landform of the Site, which results in areas which are low lying and shielded by the higher ground;
  - The presence of buildings extending from the perimeter of the Site outwards to the north, south and west; and
  - Areas of mature woodland and mature hedgerows.
- 2.44 Due to an interaction of the landform, enclosing woodland elements and adjacent built form (in the context of the height parameters), the Visual Envelope is primarily localised, limited to the Site and its immediate context. Distant viewpoints are limited to high ground to the north east of the Site.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.essexhighways.org/Getting-Around/public-rights-of-way/prow-interactive-map.aspx>

<sup>9</sup> The ZTV mapping has been prepared with Mapinfo and Vertical Mapper utilising 2m resolution terrain data derived from aerial photography. These datasets contain information on buildings and trees. The 'tree' data sets do not include the full tree

canopy; therefore, the mapping is a worse-case scenario, the trees actually provide greater screening than the mapping indicates.

<sup>10</sup> The photographs have been taken with a Canon 5DS R DSLR Camera and 50mm f/1.4 prime Lens.





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2.45 Within the *Essex Landscape Character Assessment*<sup>11</sup> the following visual sensitivities are identified:

- Visually exposed steep escarpments
- High intervisibility on marshlands

2.46 These have limited relevance to the Site. However, within the *Green Belt Landscape Assessment*, 2010, the visual sensitivity of the Site and wider area is recorded as being High, based on the following recorded observations:

- General Visibility: Northern part of the area is more steeply sloping with views east. Central part of the Site is densely wooded and enclosed. Southern part is enclosed and well screened by woodland and mature hedgerows.
- Population: Visible to residential properties in the immediate vicinity of the area. Scatter of houses and farmsteads along Daws Heath Road within the Site.
- Mitigation: Scope to mitigate the impacts of development in the southern part of the Site through additional planting.

2.47 In terms of visual containment, existing residential properties prevent views into the Site from the majority of the road network in the vicinity of the Site. Exceptions exist for a short section of Daws Heath Road near to the equestrian facilities, Rayleigh Road and from the end of Asquith Avenue and alongside Firfield Road. To the north the extent of the visual envelope is defined by the development off Stadium Way. Views from the east are limited and obscured by the presence of the characteristic woodland and mature hedge lines. Overall, the extent to which the Site is visible from the wider area is limited, so that the primary issue is local views.

## Visual receptors

2.48 The relevant local vantage points can be summarised as:

- Users of PROW BENF\_7.
- Residents fronting Firfield Road.
- Residents on Asquith Gardens backing onto the Site – generally open views.
- Residents on Daws Heath Road backing onto the Site

- People traveling on Daws Heath Road adjacent to the equestrian facilities.
- Those visiting and working in the retail park north of the Site.
- Distant views from the relatively higher ground south of Hockley Woods.

2.49 Within the Site the existing vegetation will limit the depth of the field of view from the external vantage points. There is no location from which the total Site area is visible.

2.50 Internally outward views are limited by the vegetation and built form in the foreground. However, there is a view of the church tower of Holy Trinity Church, Rayleigh (Figure 7).



Figure 2.6: View of the Holy Trinity church tower, Rayleigh

2.51 This off-Site landmark provides an opportunity to inform the masterplan to reference the context and assist with legibility within the new development. There are no eye level views from within the vicinity of the church back into the Site.

## Visual composition

2.52 The visual composition is described alongside the representative viewpoints (VP) selected for the purposes of this assessment.

2.53 In general terms views from the north are limited in geographic extent. From the southern edge of Hockley Woods (VP 12 and 13) views are wide ranging, expansive and encapsulate the wooded plateau landscapes in the distance, with settlement nestled within the lower lying valley form. Near views from the north are restricted to the northern boundary of the Site and as such are dominated by the retail and business development giving a highly urban appearance.

2.54 From the east views are entire dominated by the woodland and are therefore enclosed and intimate.

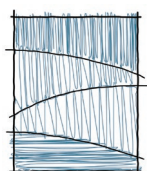
2.55 From the south and west the composition of the views is mixed, with an urban foreground and glimpsed views of the open agricultural farmland beyond. Views from the properties typically filtered by trees in the domestic gardens.

## Representative viewpoints taken forward in the assessment of effects

2.56 Having completed the analysis, the following viewpoints will form the basis of the assessment. The distant views from the southern edge of Hockley Woods have been omitted.

- Users of PROW BENF\_7.
- Residents fronting Firfield Road.
- Residents on Asquith Gardens backing onto the Site – generally open views.
- Residents on Daws Heath Road backing onto the Site –
- People traveling on Daws Heath Road adjacent to the equestrian facilities.
- Those visiting and working in the retail park north of the Site.

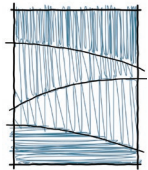
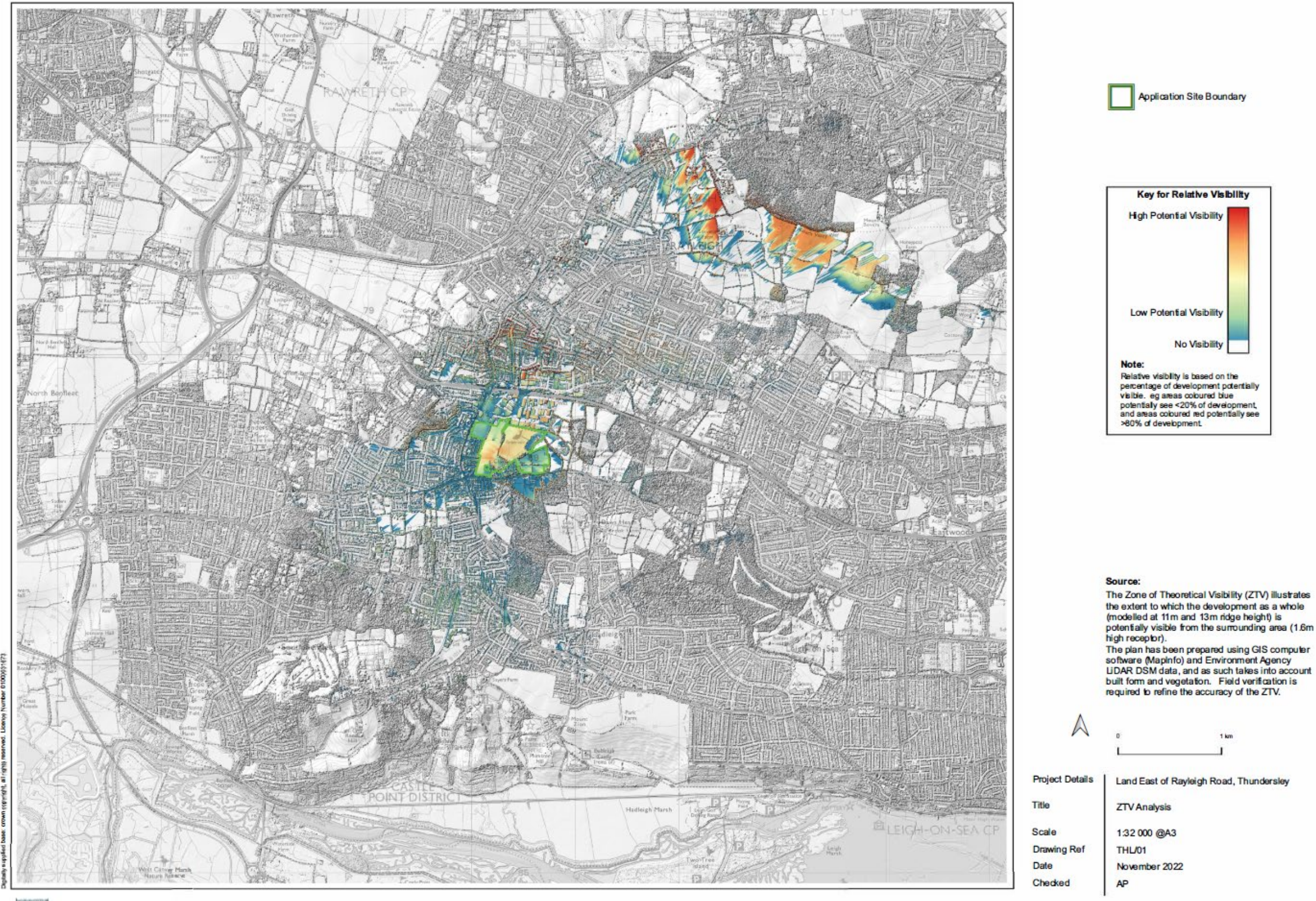
<sup>11</sup> *Essex & Southend-on-Sea Replacement Structure Plan Review – Essex Landscape Character Assessment*, Final Report 2003.





Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

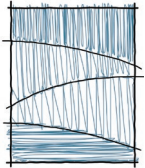
Figure 2.7: Zone of Theoretical Visibility





Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Figure 2.8: Representative viewpoints and visual envelope





Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment



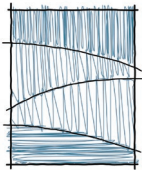
Viewpoint 1b – 580676,188842: Daws Heath Road looking west.



Viewpoint 1b – 580676,188842: Daws Heath Road looking east.

From this location the visual composition is varied. Occasional clusters of housing are interspersed along the road with frequent open areas of pasture. Street lighting, chain link fencing and road markings are notable urban features in the view. The depth of the field of view is limited by mature hedgerows and woodlands so that the principle focus of the view is the road, which has a strongly linear character. Beyond Daws Heath Road the layering of tree cover prevents middle- and long-distance views but conveys a strongly wooded character to the north. The skyline is formed by the tree canopies.

 <b>LEYTON PLACE</b> LANDSCAPE PLANNING Lilac Cottage, Gloucester Road, Hartpury, GLOS GL19 3BT <a href="http://www.leytonplacelandscap.co.uk">www.leytonplacelandscap.co.uk</a>	<b>Photosheet 1</b> People represented by this viewpoint location – Residents on Daws Heath Road, Pedestrians alongside Daws Heath Road and those in vehicles travelling on the road.	Date: 07 June 2021 Drawing Number: 2014_PS1 Drawn by: MP Checked by: AP	Project title: Rayleigh Road, Thundersley Client: Drawing Title: Photosheet 1
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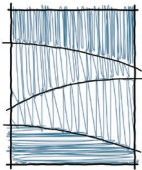


**Viewpoint 2 – 580565,188840: Daws Heath Road looking west.**  
From this location the visual composition is varied. Occasional clusters of housing are interspersed along the road with open areas of pasture. Street lighting, chain link fencing and road markings are notable urban features in the view. The depth of the field of view is limited by mature hedgerows and woodlands so that the principle focus of the view is the road, which has a strongly linear character. Beyond Daws Heath Road the layering of tree cover limits long-distance views and conveys a strongly wooded character to the north. Breaks in the hedgerows allows glimpses of open pasture in the middle distance. The skyline is punctuated by trees in the foreground but is generally a mix of tree canopies and open breaks.



**Viewpoint 3 – 580172,188809: Daws Heath Road looking north west.**  
As one moves west along Daws Heath Road the character of the visual composition becomes increasingly urban. At this point in the streetscene housing, dominates the view. There is extremely limited visual permeability beyond the properties alongside the road. Occasional breaks in the developed frontage allows glimpses to open sky but the Site is not visible.

 <b>LEYTON PLACE</b> LANDSCAPE PLANNING Lilac Cottage, Gloucester Road, Hartpury, GLOS GL19 3BT <a href="http://www.leytonplacelandscape.co.uk">www.leytonplacelandscape.co.uk</a>	<b>Photosheet 2</b> People represented by these viewpoint locations – Residents on Daws Heath Road, Pedestrians alongside Daws Heath Road and those in vehicles travelling on the road.	Date: 07 June 2021 Drawing Number: 2014_PS2 Drawn by: MP Checked by: AP	Project title: Rayleigh Road, Thundersley Client: Drawing Title: Photosheet 2
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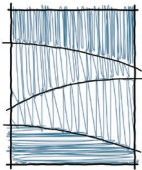


**Viewpoint 4 – 580071,188981: End of Cul-de-Sac Asquith Avenue looking east.**  
From this location there are open and uninterrupted views of and across the Site. The depth of the field of view is extensive with the view fringed by mature hedgerows and woodlands. The visual composition is simple and distinctly 'countryside'. The skyline is punctuated by trees in the foreground but is generally a mix of tree canopies and open breaks, with distance woodland on rising ground evident as the backdrop to the view.



**Viewpoint 5 – 579981,189230: Rayleigh Road, looking north and north east.**  
From this location the visual context and composition is varied, although there is a distinctly urban sense of place in respect of the viewpoint location. Housing is continuous to the west of Rayleigh Road with the open rough grass of the Site notable to the east. Street lighting, fencing and road markings are notable urban features in the view. The depth of the field of view is limited by mature hedgerows and woodlands, the layering of tree cover prevents long-distance views but conveys a strongly wooded character to the north and east. The skyline is formed by the tree canopies.

 <b>LEYTON PLACE</b> LANDSCAPE PLANNING Lilac Cottage, Gloucester Road, Hartpury, GLOS GL19 3BT <a href="http://www.leytonplacelandscape.co.uk">www.leytonplacelandscape.co.uk</a>	<b>Photosheet 3</b> People represented by these viewpoint locations – Residents on Asquith Avenue, Asquith Gardens, Firfield Road and Raleigh Road, Pedestrians and those in vehicles travelling on the roads.	Date: 07 June 2021 Drawing Number: 2014_PS3 Drawn by: MP Checked by: AP	Project title: Rayleigh Road, Thundersley Client: Drawing Title: Photosheet 3
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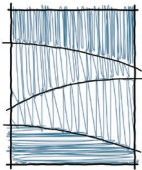


**Viewpoint 6 – 580035,189207: Footpath to the rear of Asquith Gardens**  
From this location there are open and uninterrupted views of and across the Site. The depth of the field of view is extensive with the view fringed by mature hedgerows and woodlands. The visual composition comprises the open rough grassland within the Site, with the housing on Rayleigh Road, retail and industrial units evident beyond a row of poplar trees, this combination conveys a peri-urban character to the visual appearance. The skyline is punctuated by trees in the foreground but is generally a mix of tree canopies and open breaks, with distance woodland on rising ground evident as the backdrop to the view.



**Viewpoint 7 – 580030,189349: Rayleigh Road, looking south east.**  
From this location the visual context and composition is varied, although there is a distinctly urban sense of place in respect of the viewpoint location. Housing is continuous to the west of Rayleigh Road with the open rough grass of the Site notable to the east. Street lighting, housing and road markings are notable urban features in the view. The depth of the field of view is limited by mature hedgerows and housing which restricts the view to the immediate foreground. The skyline is formed by the tree canopies and roofscape of the settlement edge.

 <b>LEYTON PLACE</b> LANDSCAPE PLANNING Lilac Cottage, Gloucester Road, Hartpury, GLOS GL19 3BT <a href="http://www.leytonplacelandscap.co.uk">www.leytonplacelandscap.co.uk</a>	<b>Photosheet 4</b> People represented by these viewpoint locations – Pedestrians on Rayleigh Road and local footpaths and Residents on Asquith Gardens.	Date: 07 June 2021 Drawing Number: 2014_PS4 Drawn by: MP Checked by: AP	Project title: Rayleigh Road, Thundersley Client: Drawing Title: Photosheet 4
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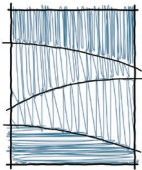


**Viewpoint 8 – 580387,189402: Stadium Way looking south west.**  
Development off Stadium Way and the dense woodland limit the visibility at this location to the immediate foreground. The context and character of the view is distinctly urban.



**Viewpoint 9 – 580418,189308: Public Right of Way BENF 7**  
From this location there are open and uninterrupted views of and across the Site. The depth of the field of view is extensive with the view fringed by mature hedgerows and woodlands. The visual composition is simple and distinctly 'countryside'. The skyline is punctuated by trees in the foreground but is generally a mix of tree canopies and open breaks, with distance woodland on rising ground evident as the backdrop to the view.

 <b>LEYTON PLACE</b> LANDSCAPE PLANNING Lilac Cottage, Gloucester Road, Hartpury, GLOS GL19 3BT <a href="http://www.leytonplacelandscap.co.uk">www.leytonplacelandscap.co.uk</a>	<b>Photosheet 5</b> People represented by these viewpoint locations – Workers and visitors to the retail park off-Stadium Way and users of the public right of way.	Date: 07 June 2021 Drawing Number: 2014_PS5 Drawn by: MP Checked by: AP	Project title: Rayleigh Road, Thundersley Client: Drawing Title: Photosheet 5
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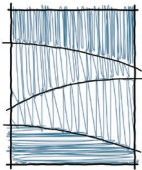


**Viewpoint 10 – 580705,189258: Public Right of Way BENF 7 north west of Little Haven Hospice**  
From this location there are restricted views of and across the Site. The depth of the field of view is limited by vegetation in the immediate foreground. The visual composition is simple and distinctly 'countryside'. The skyline is punctuated by trees in the foreground but is generally a mix of tree canopies and open breaks.



**Viewpoint 11 – 581084,189485: Public Right of Way BENF 8**  
From this location the woodland and tree cover limits views of the Site.

 <div>LILAC COTTAGE, Gloucester Road, Hartpury, GLOS GL19 3BT <a href="http://www.leytonplacelandscaplaning.co.uk">www.leytonplacelandscaplaning.co.uk</a></div>	<b>Photosheet 6</b> People represented by these viewpoint locations – Pedestrians using local footpaths and Public Rights of Way	Date: 07 June 2021 Drawing Number: 2014_PS6 Drawn by: MP Checked by: AP	Project title: Rayleigh Road, Thundersley Client: Drawing Title: Photosheet 6
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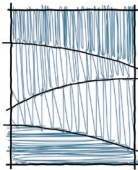


Viewpoint 12 – 583006,191293: Informal footpath south of PROW 290\_1



Viewpoint 13 – 582347,191317: Public Right of Way 289 65  
From these locations there are open and wide-ranging views across the landscape extending to the distant horizon. The foreground is rural countryside and dominates the visual composition and character. Settlement is a component of the visual composition, but it typically nestles within the lower lying landform and is interspersed and contained by significant deciduous tree cover. The Site is not discernible from these distant vantage points.

 <b>LEYTON PLACE</b> LANDSCAPE PLANNING Lilac Cottage, Gloucester Road, Hartpury, GLOS GL19 3BT <a href="http://www.leytonplacelandscap.co.uk">www.leytonplacelandscap.co.uk</a>	<b>Photosheet 7</b> People represented by these viewpoint locations – Pedestrians using public right of way network.	Date: 07 June 2021 Drawing Number: 2014_PS7 Drawn by: MP Checked by: AP	Project title: Rayleigh Road, Thundersley Client: Drawing Title: Photosheet 7
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Section 3: Evaluation of the Sensitivity of Resources and Receptors

3.1 The sensitivity of the landscape (resource) and people experiencing the views (receptors) is established by considering both the value of the resource/view and the susceptibility of each to accommodate the proposed without undue<sup>12</sup> negative consequences.

Landscape value

3.2 This aspect relating to ‘sensitivity’ is “the relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society” (Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, GLVIA, 3, Glossary and further explored in Assessing landscape value outside national designations, LI Technical Guidance Note 02/21).

3.3 Landscape Value is rated, for the purposes of this assessment on the following scale:

- National/International – Designated landscapes which are nationally or internationally designated for their landscape value – including National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, World Heritage Sites; Heritage Coast and National Scenic Areas.
- Borough – Locally or regionally designated landscapes (e.g., Area of High Landscape Value, Regional Scenic Areas); also, areas which local evidence (such as tourism guides, landscape character assessments or other documentary information) indicates as being more valued than the surrounding area.
- Local – ‘everyday’ landscape which is appreciated by the local community but has little or no wider recognition of its value.

3.4 As noted above the landscape characterisation process does not assign ‘value’ to the landscape. Information which may contribute to the understanding of value may include:

- Areas recognised by statute
- Local Plans (extent of policies for local landscape designations)
- Information regarding individual elements such as Conservation Areas, TPOs etc.
- Art and literature
- Material on landscape or local of community interests, such as local green spaces, village greens or allotments.

3.5 In this instance the Site is not affected by designations or policies such as:

- SSSI;
- Habitat Sites;
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- National Park;
- Heritage Coast;
- Irreplaceable habitats;
- Areas at risk of flooding or coastal change; and
- Designated heritage assets<sup>13</sup>.

3.6 This assessment recognises both the character of the landscape and distinct features which contribute to the broader character but may have value in their own right. The application site does not possess qualities which elevate it above local value, it is not an NPPF ‘valued landscape’ (NPPF, para 174 a)), this is a matter addressed in the applicant’s local plan representations.

Landscape susceptibility

3.7 Susceptibility indicates the ability of a defined landscape or visual receptor to accommodate the proposed development “without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.” (GLVIA 3, paragraph 5.40).

- At the highest end of the ‘susceptibility spectrum’ is a landscape wherein changes in terms of the proposed development would be entirely at odds with the character of the local area, related to matters including pattern, grain, use, scale, and mass. The development would require

extensive change to the topography, vegetative cover, or form of buildings.

- Mid-way on the spectrum is a landscape wherein the proposed development has a degree of consistency with the existing scale, pattern, grain, land use of the prevailing character, although mitigation may be appropriate to enhance assimilation.
- At the lower end of the spectrum the proposed development is entirely consistent with the character of the local area, related to matters including pattern, grain, use, scale, and mass.

Landscape sensitivity of the Site and its context

3.8 At the lower end of the spectrum (low sensitivity) resources may be; low valued/undesignated landscapes, with no distinctive or sensitive features, with the potential to accommodate appropriately design development, and where adverse effects can be mitigated for. At the higher end of the range are; those highly valued/designated landscapes recognised in policy, may contain landscape features that cannot accommodate development of the type proposed, and where mitigation measures are unable to avoid, compensate or offset the undue consequences which would arise.

3.9 Table 1 sets out the rationale to the classification of the value and susceptibility of each landscape receptor, and ultimately the sensitivity by way of reference to the spectrum A-E.

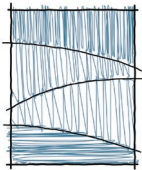
Overall landscape sensitivity

3.10 Based on the above conclusions the landscape character of the Site and the urban environment to the east the landscape sensitivity is towards the **lower end of the spectrum**.

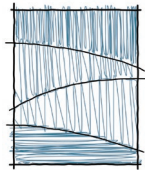
3.11 The parkland to the west and New River lies within the **middle of the sensitivity spectrum**. The scheme will require mitigation to address the relative value and ability to accommodate change.

<sup>12</sup> Undue being defined as - unwarranted or inappropriate because excessive or disproportionate.

<sup>13</sup> NPPF, paragraph 11, footnote 7





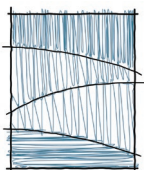




# Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

*Table 3.1: Landscape sensitivity evaluation*

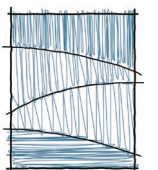
Landscape Resource	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Landscape of the Site in the context of Area 4 of the 2010 study	<p>In the absence of a formal designation an indication of value may be apparent by a 'conserve' guideline in the published characterisation. This is not provided for in the current landscape evidence base.</p> <p>Overall, the landscape of the Site is not a 'Valued Landscape' as set out in paragraph 174 a) of the NPPF. The adjoining landscape to the east, benefits from a positive visioning strategy which indicates that that the ecological value may trigger paragraph 174 a) of the NPPF. As such any development should respect the transitional zone between the and the land subject to the Living Landscape Project.</p> <p>The designation as Green Belt is not a landscape designation, it is a spatial planning policy, which can be assessed using the techniques provided for by the landscape planning profession. Some purposes and elements of the supporting text do provide guidance in respect of landscape and visual resources.</p> <p>The Site has not been, nor is currently, the subject of a landscape quality/value designation. Clearly the local community values the land to the extent that trespass is frequent and there are locally established routes within the fields. The value is local and not recognised beyond the immediate environment.</p> <p>Overall, the landscape is of local value, in the low to mid-range of the spectrum (B).</p>	<p>The draft allocation of the Site for mixed use development, following scrutiny of the alternatives, and strategy for the Council to deliver growth indicated that in directing development to this location there was a degree of acceptance, in the context of the alternative strategies, that development would be appropriate in this location.</p> <p>The proposals are consistent with the Site's context through the provision of housing of a scale, mass and grain which complements the existing situation. The development will require engineering works to accommodate the drainage strategy, the applicant's consultant team consider that there is a sensitive design solution which will provide for diversification of habitats and landscape/recreational assets. The inherent design measures, including the provision of extensive new tree planting and accessible open space will contribute to an appropriate approach to assimilate development in this location.</p> <p>Overall, the Site susceptibility is low to mid-way on the spectrum (B). The susceptibility is graduated across the Site from low in the west and moderate in the east.</p>	<p>The sensitivity of the Site to the development proposed is <b>low to mid</b> way (B).</p>
Landform	<p>The landform of the Site and the wider area is a notable aspect which underpins the local character and influences both the townscape qualities and the rural landscape.</p> <p>Whilst not specifically assigned a 'value' it is recorded in the published characterisations.</p> <p>This has local value but is not determinative as to planning considerations. It does have an important role in the development of an appropriate development response.</p> <p>The value is at the low-mid range of the spectrum (B).</p>	<p>Because of the scale and extent of the landform's influence it is not susceptible to the type of development proposed.</p> <p>The settlements of Thundersley, Rayleigh and Hadleigh are accommodated within the landform, the understanding of which is not diminished by the development.</p> <p>The susceptibility of the landform is at the lowest end of the spectrum (A).</p>	<p>The sensitivity of the landform to the development proposed is <b>low</b> (A).</p>





# Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Landscape Resource	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Mature hedgerows	<p>There are no TPO's relating to the trees within the Site.</p> <p>A number of the hedgerows coincide with historic field boundaries and provide visual and physical containment, contribute to the scenic qualities of the landscape, and provide interconnected wildlife habitats. Whilst these benefits are localised, they are important and positive assets in the landscape.</p> <p>As a result, the value of these features is considered to be at the <b>mid to high</b> end of the spectrum (D).</p>	<p>Replacement of these features (delivering the same functions in respect of diversity, scenic value etc.) would be ineffective for a considerable period of time.</p> <p>The hedgerows are of <b>high</b> susceptibility to change (E).</p>	<p>The sensitivity of the hedgerows to the development proposed is <b>mid-high</b> (D).</p>
Woodlands	<p>None of the woodlands within the site are Ancient Woodland, some small areas are listed as on the Priority Habitat Inventory.</p> <p>The on-site woodlands are connected by hedgerows and provide visual and physical containment, contribute to the scenic qualities of the landscape, and provide wildlife habitats. Whilst these benefits are localised, they are important and positive assets in the landscape.</p> <p>As a result, the value of these features is at the <b>mid to high</b> end of the spectrum (D).</p>	<p>Replacement of these features (delivering the same functions in respect of diversity, scenic value etc.) would be ineffective for a considerable period of time.</p> <p>The woodlands are of <b>high</b> susceptibility to change (E).</p>	<p>The sensitivity of the woodlands to the development proposed is <b>mid-high</b> (D).</p>
Informal routes and green lanes	<p>These routes and access points are not identified on the definitive rights of way maps. They have been formed and reinforced by community access (trespass). These provide a series of attractive interconnected routes of benefit to the residents. The absence of any formal definition means they are not a destination for people from beyond the local area.</p> <p>The value of these routes is at the <b>mid to low</b> end of the spectrum (B).</p>	<p>Because the routes are not defined by any legal mechanism or present on the Definitive Rights of Way mapping the provision for access and movement can be modified and readily replicated. The loss of agricultural context is balanced with the fact that footpaths within the settlement are typically highly urbanised. The Green Lanes are currently set within a domesticated or horticulture setting.</p> <p>The susceptibility of the informal routes and green lanes to the type of development proposed is at the <b>lowest</b> end of the spectrum (A).</p>	<p>The sensitivity of the routes, to the development proposed, is at the <b>low to mid</b> way range (B).</p>
Off-Site Living Landscapes Project	<p>As described this landscape lies to the east of the Site. As a project which is subject to analysis, a vision and supported by a network of interested bodies this unit of land has a value which extends beyond its immediate boundaries but is not a regional or nationally valued asset.</p> <p>This area is of <b>moderate</b> value (C).</p>	<p>Whilst this lies outside of the redline area development has the potential to affect the perceptual qualities and wildlife and recreational value. The development can accommodate shared 'visioning' and therefore the susceptibility of the landscape is in the <b>mid-range</b> of the spectrum (C).</p>	<p>The sensitivity of the Off-site living landscapes project, to the development proposed, is <b>mid</b>-way on the range (C).</p>





# Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

## Value attached to the views

3.12 The value of views should take account of:

- Recognition of value attached to a particular view, possibly associated to a heritage asset, or planning designation; and/or
- Indicators of the value through guidebooks, tourist maps, or historic references.

## Susceptibility to visual change

3.13 For the purposes of this assessment, the susceptibility of people to changes in their views and visual experience is a function of the occupation of the people, the extent to which their attention or interest is focused on the views and the visual amenity they experience at a particular location.

3.14 It is noted that none of the vantage points identified by this assessment are either acknowledged or protected in policy as

an important or key view, nor are any views recorded in published material on maps as being of local value or associated with an important landmark.

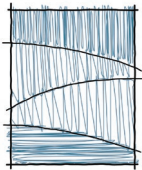
## Visual sensitivity

3.15 At the lower end of spectrum may be those people engaged in an activity which is not focused on the landscape or context of the person/people, where the views are infrequent, the representative or specific viewpoints are not associated with a valued landscape or asset. At the higher end of the spectrum people are engaged in an activity whereby the focus of the visual experience is directly linked to the landscape context, the views are associated with a valued landscape or important assets/landmarks, and the number or people and frequency of the visual experience is high.

3.16 Table 3.2 sets out the rationale to the classification of the value and susceptibility of each visual receptor, and ultimately the sensitivity by way of reference to the spectrum A-E.

Table 3.2: Visual Sensitivity Evaluation

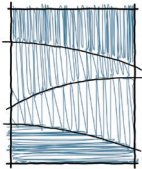
Visual Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Users of PROW BENF_7	This is a local footpath alongside the retail park and business units. There is some local value to this route as it connects people to the countryside. The value is in the <b>mid-range</b> of the value spectrum.	The route links the retail and business uses with the wooded landscape to the east. Typically, people will be using the route for recreational purposes of part of a daily route to work/local facilities. People are likely to be engaged with their visual environment. The susceptibility of these people lies between the <b>high and mid-range</b> of the spectrum.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is within the <b>mid-range</b> of the spectrum (C).
Residents fronting Firfield Road	Properties benefit from an outward facing position in the townscape, but this location does not facilitate a 'vantage point' of more than <b>low</b> value	Residents experience their environment daily, particularly they will be susceptible to change viewed from those rooms occupied in daylight hours. These people will be at the <b>higher end</b> of the range.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is within the <b>mid to high range</b> of the spectrum (D).
Residents on Asquith Gardens backing onto the Site – generally open views	Properties benefit from an outward facing position in the townscape, but this location does not facilitate a 'vantage point' of more than <b>low</b> value		
Residents on Daws Heath Road backing onto the Site – Views from the properties typically filtered by trees in the domestic gardens.	Properties benefit from an outward facing position in the townscape, but this location does not facilitate a 'vantage point' of more than <b>low</b> value		
People traveling on Daws Heath Road adjacent to the equestrian facilities,	There is no value associated with views from the road network, it is a commuter route and not part of a 'scenic' network for pleasure travel.	Whilst views may be experienced daily the visual context is the background to travel activities which are the prime focus of those people. These people have the <b>lowest</b> level of susceptibility to change.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is at the <b>lowest</b> end of the spectrum (A).





Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Visual Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Those visiting and working in the retail park north of the Site	There is no value associated with views from and within the retail and business park.	Whilst views may be experienced daily the visual context is the background to the work and travel activities which are the prime focus of those people. These people have the <b>lowest</b> level of susceptibility to change.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is at the <b>lowest</b> end of the spectrum (A).





Section 4: Design evolution and mitigation measures

- 4.1 The application proposes the delivery of
- Up to 455 new homes
  - Approximately 14.27 ha of publicly accessible multifunctional open space, laid out and managed in accordance with the principles shown on the Masterplan.
- 4.2 Mitigation measures are those measure, both incorporated into, or dismissed during the design process to:
- Prevent/avoid adverse effects,
  - Reduce effects; and, where possible,
  - Offset or remedy (or compensate for) any significant adverse landscape and visual effects.
- 4.3 Enhancement measures are subtly different, as they seek to improve the landscape resource and the visual amenity of the proposed development Site and its wider setting, over and above its baseline condition.
- 4.4 The approach of the applicants and its advisors has been to 'design-in' the mitigation strategy both in terms of designed and created solutions and long-term management to minimise the overall effects.
- 4.5 The baseline analysis (landscape **and** townscape) is a critical component of the design process and achieving a successful outcome in respect of the masterplan.

- 4.6 The existing character is important. By understanding the existing sense of place and relationship of buildings to the spaces they are adjacent to and within, the approach to delivering a landscape-led scheme emerges and ensures that the new development complements its context and is anchored to its location.
- 4.7 This is an issue considered in Guidelines for *Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (GLVIA 3), Chapter 4: The Proposed Development, Design and Mitigation. Paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 state:

*“Design plays an increasingly important part in the development planning process. This has been emphasised by the introduction of statutory requirements for the production of designs statements, or design and access statements, for many planning proposals in different parts of the UK. Such Statements explain the design principles and concepts underpinning the proposal and process through which it has evolved. This includes the ways in which the context of the development, including the landscape, has been appraised or assessed and how the design of the development takes that context into account in relation to its proposed use.”*

*“EIA itself can be an important design tool. It is now usually an iterative process the stages feed into the planning and design of the project. The iterative design and assessment process has great strength because it links the analysis of the environmental issues with steps to improve the siting, layout, and design of a particular scheme.”*

- 4.8 This contextually informed iterative process is essential in understanding the baseline situation, interplay of components, sense of place and delivering an appropriate and complementary settlement expansion scheme.
- 4.9 As noted above Leyton Place has worked with the masterplanners to understand the townscape and landscape character and qualities to inform the development of the masterplan. The applicant’s team has worked in a fully collaborative manner to achieve an appropriate design outcome.

Site location

- 4.10 It has been established through the Local Plan process, supported by various studies that form the evidence base to the adopted Local Plan, that the Site is a suitable strategic location for settlement growth.

The Site is physically, visually, and perceptually associated with the existing settlement edge.

Design approach and integration

- 4.11 From the outset of the project the team has sought to achieve a landscape-led design solution to delivering the much needed new homes in the context of a number of technical and environmental constraints (See DAS).
- 4.12 The landscape constraints were identified and shared with the team in July 2020. These were described under landscape and visual sensitivities (numbers in **[brackets]** refer to numbering on Figure 4.1):

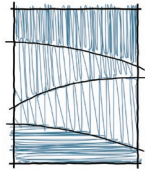
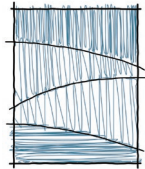






Figure 4.1: Sketch of landscape sensitivities





# Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

## *Landscape sensitivities*

- 4.13 The site is in a broad area where the integrity of woodland and hedgerows is valued and important to the landscape character [1 and 10]. With the evidential historic removal of hedgerows [3], the remaining tree features have elevated value and are more sensitive to further erosion and loss. Recreation is possible but requires a period of time to establish, as a result existing hedgerows and woodland should be retained and protected.
- 4.14 Those boundaries which incorporate ancient field pattern, such as the Green Lanes [7 and 11] provide a reference to the past and are beneficial for the movement and connectivity of wildlife and habitats. These are difficult to recreate, and any new elements would lack the historic references, these features are of the highest order of sensitivity. Along with the physical presence of the Green Lanes there is a sense of tranquility and remoteness that adds to their character and value.
- 4.15 The land-use beyond the Site's boundaries introduce an inherent sensitivity to the landscape within the Site. The larger commercial and retail buildings to the north [12], adjacent to the more open landscape, will affect the type of development to be incorporated within any masterplan, as it will be necessary to address the amenity of the neighbouring land uses. The land adjoining these retail areas will be less sensitive to development, but the new residential occupiers will make the juxtaposition of land uses challenging. By contrast the presence of existing residential development does not create the same change in the sensitivity of the Site's character but the existing residents are more likely to be sensitive to the changes in respect of their amenity, particularly where they benefit from an open and agricultural landscape [4].
- 4.16 The landscape to the east is locally acknowledged as being sensitive through the Historic Natural Landscape policy NE2 [9]. This would be regarded as a valued landscape and requires development to enhance the quality of the landscape assets and avoid impacting on the undeveloped and visual quality of the landscape. It is anticipated that this policy would be relevant to changes occurring within the setting of the ascribed landscape, which includes the Site. The eastern portion of the site is therefore sensitive from this perspective [8].
- 4.17 The fishing pond is a relatively recent addition to the landscape, it is regular in form and has a more ornamental appearance and

quality, contrasting with the natural landscapes to the east [9 & 10]. It is not a sensitive landscape asset, albeit there will be value placed on this by the users, which elevates its sensitivity in perceptual terms.

- 4.18 The landform is representative of the local area, some areas have steep slopes which create variation in the landscape and have a more intimate character, this different character will be sensitive to development, furthermore the feasibility of development in this location may be challenging [5].
- 4.19 The distinction between the townscapes of the conurbation of Thundersley and Rayleigh and the outlying Daws Heath is important, and the Site has a role in maintaining the sense of separation and distinction in the townscapes. The 'gap' as appreciated from Daws Heath Road is the most sensitive part of the Site in this respect [6].

## *Visual sensitivities*

- 4.20 The views from Daws Heath Road, where the site does not benefit from existing residential development, are visually sensitive, both because of the relative openness of the view and the role this visual character plays in reinforcing the sense of separation between the settlements [6].
- 4.21 Views from the public right of way to the north have a degree of sensitivity but the retail/commercial context reduces the way in which the views are appreciated [12]. However, there is some benefit in having relatively open views contrasting with the enclosed urban fabric. However, such open views are not geographically sensitive.
- 4.22 Internally the view of the church tower [2] to the north is important in providing a landmark in the view and allowing legibility and orientation with the townscape.
- 4.23 The mature vegetation plays an important and effective role in defining depth of the field of view and softening the appearance of the residential areas, this is an important function and combined with the contribution these assets make to the character of the area adds to their sensitivity.

## *Landscape recommendations*

- 4.24 Having concluded the analysis, the following recommendations we made to the team (numbers in [brackets] refer to numbering on Figure 4.2).

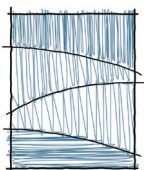
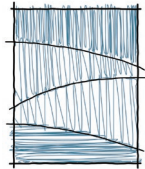






Figure 4.2: Indicative landscape framework





# Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

- 4.25 The starting point is to retain and bring into management, the existing woodland and hedgerow cover [7, HO13 (c)]. This will ensure the longevity of these sensitive and locally representative features.
- 4.26 The restoration of the historic hedge lines would be beneficial for a number of reasons [1, Policy HO13 (d) (e)]:
- Provides a wooded framework to the development creating opportunities to define townscape character and land uses
  - Restores the historic field pattern which is continuous with the natural landscape to the east.
  - The hedgerows, as they mature, will filter views within and across the landscape.
  - The new hedge lines can be combined with open space so that there are attractive recreational routes which also provide for enhanced biodiversity and habitats across the site connecting with the landscape to the east [HO13 (f)].
  - Gaps within the hedgerows, combined with open space should enable views and vista through the new development.
- 4.27 The more intimate and steeply sloping land [2] should be left undeveloped, the steepness of the landform would enable the creation of a non-accessible, non-intervention ecological zone, which connects to the existing and new hedge lines.
- 4.28 On Daws Heath Road new woodland should be provided alongside the road to limit views into the site and to development on the higher ground [3]. The woodland is necessary to ensure a sense of separation of the settlements and create a distinction between the edge of Thundersley and Daws Heath.
- 4.29 The Green Lanes [4 HO13 (b)] must be retained and set within a well-designed landscape framework to maintain the level of tranquility and reinforce the 'ancient' qualities of the landscape. Within this eastern portion of the site there should provide for a transition to a lower density development to allow for the incorporation of substantial tree planting within the development to provide for better assimilation in the setting of the Historic Natural Landscapes to the east.
- 4.30 The northern boundary, contiguous with the public right of way, should incorporate measures to address the bulk and massing of the retail/commercial development to address the conflict with smaller scale residential development [5].

- 4.31 Within the lower-lying land, near to the existing stream and pond, there are opportunities to incorporate sustainable urban drainage measures which will also provide the transitional zone between development and the Historic Natural Landscapes [6 and HO13 (g)].

- 4.32 The Site has capacity to accommodate development with a strong and positive multifunctional landscape framework.

## Mitigation measures

- 4.33 The collaborative design approach taken by the applicant's team has resulted in a scheme which has understood the sensitivities and embraced the landscape and visual recommendations.
- 4.34 This has resulted in a scheme which incorporates all mitigation as a fundamental component of the proposals.

## Prevention/avoidance

- 4.35 The scheme proposals incorporate the following measures to minimise the landscape and visual impacts:
- Confine built development to that area of the Site which adjoins the settlement edge to the west, north and south, transitioning to the more rural landscapes to the east.
  - Retain boundary vegetation, with the exception of that required to facilitate access (vehicular and pedestrian) into the site.
  - Provide for components consistent with the existing situation, drawing on the more attractive elements of the townscape (see the DAS).

## Reduction/minimisation

- 4.36 Where trees or scrub are lost in the creation of the new access and flood attenuation measures, new tree planting is provided for within the open space, in a quantum and quality greater and better than that lost to the development proposals, this is addressed in the ecology report.
- 4.37 Impacts on the mature trees is minimised extensively through their retention within an appropriate buffer both during the construction and development phases of the project.
- 4.38 During the construction phase the following measures will be adopted to minimise the likely effects:

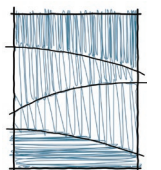
- Existing trees and hedgerows that are to be retained within the Proposed Development will be protected. Measures will be implemented to ensure that trees / hedgerows which will not be removed do not suffer direct damage through operations on Site or indirect damage from spillages within the root zone or storage, causing root compaction, in accordance with BS 5837:2012 and the Habitat Regulations, 1997.

- 4.39 Lighting that is necessary during the winter months of construction will minimise sky glow, light spill, and glare. The following mitigation will be delivered through an appropriately worded condition:

- Lighting will only focus on the area needed for construction activity, public amenity, and safety;
- Up lighting will be kept to a minimum. Lighting equipment will be chosen to minimise the upward spread of light where possible, minimising the use of lighting columns; and
- To reduce the glare of lighting, the main beam angle will be adjusted so as not to be directed towards potential observers.

## Enhancement measures

- 4.40 The following, additional measures are provided to enhance the settlement edge character and ensure longevity of notable elements. These are shown on the Open Space Strategy plan which accompanies the planning application.
- New habitats and multifunctional green infrastructure, these are described in full in the DAS
  - The GI assets will be expanded above those found in the baseline situation to include a greater number of trees, sustainable drainage features, public access, increased provision of allotments and informal recreation facilities.
  - In turn these assets will increase and diversify the Green Infrastructure, above and beyond the baseline situation in respect of the following:
    - Climate Change adaptation – a modest increase in tree canopy cover will have a positive effect on the urban heat island effect through evapotranspiration and shading;
    - Enhanced water management – using sustainable means for controlling run off coupled with enhanced biodiversity and the recreational environment;



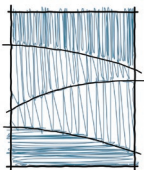


# Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

- Food Production- the provision of allotments/community growing gardens and additional incorporation of fruiting trees enhancing the local opportunities for the provision of food and reducing food miles;
- Biodiversity enhancement – the enhanced provision and greater variety of interconnected habitats, including grassland, scrub, tree groups and water features will enable species to diversify and migrate;
- Recreation and health – provision of new recreational assets in close proximity to people's homes is critical in providing a positive environment for the health and wellbeing of the community;
- Education – the provision of interpretation boards associated with the ecological habitats is an opportunity to assist in people's connectivity and relationship with its environment;
- Creation of a network of
- community open space and parkland directly accessible from the settlement edge, allowing the community to recreate and connect to the landscape beyond.

4.41 Due to mitigation measures being designed into the scheme proposals, no design measures identified to further reduce or offset the landscape and visual effects identified.

4.42 The open spaces are a fundamental component of the proposals to ensure appropriate assimilation and integration with the wider settlement.





Section 5: Magnitude of change

- 5.1

The *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (GLVIA 3) recognises the importance of professional judgement in undertaking the assessment of effects in determining the likely significance of effects. To overcome the potential problems associated with the over-reliance on matrices and tabular summaries of effects, which have typically been used in the past, in the latest guidance there is a greater emphasis on the need for narrative text describing the landscape and visual effect and the judgements made on their significance.
- 5.2

The significance of the effect is a function of the sensitivity of the resource or receptor and the magnitude of the change. Having determined the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors in section 3 above, Tables 5.5-5.8 set out the degree to which the landscape and visual environment is changed (magnitude of change) and how these changes are brought about.
- 5.3

GLVIA 3 (paragraph 6.29) states:  
  
*“...effects can be described as positive or negative (or in some cases neutral) in their consequences for views and visual amenity.”*

Table 5.1: Magnitude of Landscape Change

Landscape Resource	Sensitivity – set out in Section 3 above	Description of change		Magnitude of effect on landscape character/resource
		Construction Phase	Completed Development	
National and regional landscape character areas		Given the scale of the published assessments and the localised geographic extent of change there will be no discernible change to the character and qualities of the Northern Thames Basin NCA and South Essex Coastal Towns LCA.		No change
Landscape of the Site in the context of Area 4 of the 2010 study	The sensitivity of the Site to the development proposed is <b>low to mid</b> way (B).	During the construction phase the character and appearance of the Site will completely change. The dynamic activities in the site clearance, preliminary works, presence of construction traffic and changes to the landform and components of the landscape will be incongruent to the baseline situation and nearby townscape and adjoining open landscapes.	Following the completion of the development the character of the site, whilst altering from its current condition and character will complement and reflect the adjoining settlement. The changes are consistent with the townscape context and deliver community and social benefits to the residents of Thundersley.	During the construction phase the magnitude of change to the character of the site will be localised, phased, short term and <b>adverse</b> . The change lies towards the <b>higher</b> end of the spectrum.

- 5.4

GLVIA 3 does not, however, state how negative or positive effects should be assessed and therefore becomes a matter of subjective judgement rather than reasoned criteria.
- Magnitude of landscape change

5.5

At the lower end of the spectrum the degree of change may be small, and the loss/addition of landscape features affecting only a limited proportion of the total extent which the resource contributes to the character. The changes are entirely consistent with the context, and the geographic extent over which the effects occur may be localised.
- 5.6

At the higher end of the spectrum the change may be over an extensive area with a high proportion of landscape elements which contribute the character of the area being lost or altered. The change may be at odds and incongruent with the context within which it occurs.
- Lighting effects

5.7

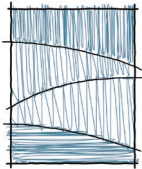
At this stage it is appropriate to touch on the issue of lighting and night-time effects. This does not form part of this LVIA for the following reasons:
  - Leyton Place Limited is not a lighting consultancy.
  - The application is made in outline and there is no lighting strategy at this stage, this will be the subject of the reserved matters application/discharge of conditions.

- 5.8

The Site is located on the immediate edge of the settlement and as such the following are existing sources of illumination in the vicinity of the Site:
  - Lighting on roads and junctions
    - A27
    - Daws heath Road
    - Stadium Way
    - Rayleigh Road,
    - Asquith Avenue
    - Firfield Road
  - Traffic headlights travelling along the local roads
  - Lighting to the car parks for the superstores north of the Site
  - Security lighting to the retail and business units north of the Site.
  - Light spill from properties abutting and in close proximity of the Site.
- 5.9

This is not a dark environment, changes to the lighting character will be consistent with the setting of the Site, albeit without the need for security/flood lighting.
- 5.10

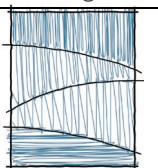
Lighting may have an effect on the character of the townscape and the views.





# Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

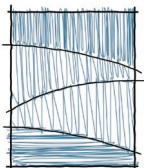
Landscape Resource	Sensitivity – set out in Section 3 above	Description of change Construction Phase	Completed Development	Magnitude of effect on landscape character/resource
		<p>Beyond the redline area there will be no physical change to the landscape and townscape components. Noise emanating from the construction activities will have an effect on the levels of tranquility in adjoining land uses, particularly noticeable in the woodlands and pastures to the east.</p> <p>The construction phase will be experienced for a period of 6 years following grant of permission, albeit areas of completed development will increase in terms of the proportion of the site affected over this timeframe.</p>		<p>On completion the primary change will be the introduction of elements consistent with the context. Whilst the character of the site will change, as with the current settlement, it will become assimilated in the physical and perceptual environment of the town. The magnitude of change is in the <b>mid-high</b> part of the spectrum. The effect in terms of the components complementing and reflecting the context will be <b>neutral</b>, as places people live, work, and socialise in are not in themselves harmful. The proposals will contribute to the character and sense of place relating to the new settlement edge.</p>
Landform	The sensitivity of the landform to the development proposed is <b>low</b> (A).	<p>The principal landform and profile will remain (plateau in the southwest corner falling to the northeast). Localised changes to the internal landform will be required to ensure appropriate gradients to accommodate road alignments, and most notably the drainage basins. This will require substantial, albeit localised, earth movements and regrading of the landform.</p> <p>Notably the design evolution has sought to confine the new housing to those open, elevated, and relatively flat parts of the Site (to the southwest) and the enclosed and relatively flat areas in the pony paddocks (to the southeast). Those areas with the greatest gradient are undeveloped and will be designed for community or ecological enhancement.</p>	The resulting settlement extension will relate to the underlying and principal landform consistent with the existing settlement. The form of the development in terms of verticality and 'shape' will complement its context.	<p>The changes both in the construction phases and on completion are highly localised but will be experienced over the long term. The design and treatment of the new landforms created are addressed below in terms of the new water features.</p> <p>The magnitude of change of the changes to the landform are <b>adverse</b> and at the <b>mid to low</b> part of the spectrum.</p>
Mature hedgerows	The sensitivity of the hedgerows to the development proposed is <b>mid-high</b> (D).	<p>During the construction phase (based on the adoption of appropriate construction management strategies) the mature vegetation, with the exception of that to be removed for access or drainage requirements, will be contained within BS compliant protective fencing.</p> <p>Approximately 30m of hedgerow will be lost during the construction phase. (See Arboricultural Impact</p>	As part of the ecological and landscape strategies new hedgerows or linear tree belts will be incorporated into the scheme, primarily within the open spaces, although there is scope in the reserved matters application to provide additional hedges within the internal housing layout, subject to design and approval. These will mature within a reasonable	<p>During the construction phase the impacts will be adverse, short-term, and localised. The magnitude of effect is <b>mid-range</b> and <b>adverse</b>.</p> <p>Post construction and with the completion of the development the extensive provision of new hedgerows</p>





# Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

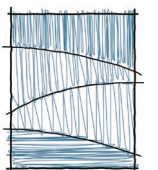
Landscape Resource	Sensitivity – set out in Section 3 above	Description of change Construction Phase	Completed Development	Magnitude of effect on landscape character/resource
		Assessment/Ecological Impact Assessment for more detail). The impact is reversible with new planting (see column 4 of this table)	<p>timeframe, particularly in the lifespan of the development.</p> <p>From a landscape perspective these new hedgerows will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compensate for the loss in the construction phase– therefore neutralising the adverse effects from the construction phase.</li> <li>• Enhance the provision of such features in the landscape, acknowledging that the integrity of these features has been in decline over a period of years.</li> <li>• Reflect the historic field pattern, anchoring the new housing to its landscape context.</li> <li>• Provide connectivity of habitats and wildlife corridors (see Ecological Impact Assessment for more detail).</li> <li>• Increase the level of tree cover and enhance functionality in respect of climate change.</li> <li>• Provide compartmentalisation within the development to assist with creating localised character and assisting with legibility within the new settlement edge.</li> <li>• Filter internal views of the housing.</li> </ul>	and tree belts results in a <b>mid-high, beneficial</b> magnitude of change.
Woodlands	The sensitivity of the woodlands to the development proposed is <b>mid-high</b> (D).	<p>During the construction phase (based on the adoption of appropriate construction management strategies) the mature vegetation, with the exception of that to be removed for access or drainage requirements, will be contained within BS compliant protective fencing.</p> <p>There will be a partial loss of approximately 0.16ha of woodland blocks/tree belts. (See Arboricultural Impact Assessment/Ecology Impact Assessment for more detail). (See column 4 of this table)</p>	<p>The scheme proposals include the provision of new tree planting, including woodland blocks (0.61ha<sup>2</sup>) and new orchards (0.75ha).</p> <p>Excluding the hedgerow/tree belts and potential individual trees there will be a net gain of 1.2ha of new woodland will be provided. The nature of tree growth means that it will be a number of years before the new woodland will be equivalent to that area lost.</p>	<p>During the construction phase the impacts will be adverse, short-term, and localised. The magnitude of effect is <b>mid-range</b> and <b>adverse</b>.</p> <p>Post construction and with the completion of the development the extensive provision of new hedgerows and tree belts results in a <b>mid-high, beneficial</b> magnitude of change.</p>
Informal routes and green lanes	The sensitivity of the routes, to the development proposed, is at the <b>low to mid</b> way range (B).	The only definitive right of way associated with the Site is BENF_7. This will be maintained within a secure fence line during the construction phase for the safety	On completion of the development there will be a series of interconnected pedestrian and cycle routes	During the construction phase the impacts will be adverse, short-term,





# Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Landscape Resource	Sensitivity – set out in Section 3 above	Description of change Construction Phase	Completed Development	Magnitude of effect on landscape character/resource
		<p>of users. The alignment and connectivity will remain unchanged.</p> <p>The current informal access (trespass) will cease in a phased manner as the development progresses. (See column 4 of this table)</p>	<p>providing linear pathways and a variety of circular routes.</p> <p>The routes will be provided in a variety of contexts, such as through the housing areas, village green, and community orchards and allotments. The setting of linear routes includes enclosed wooded areas, open meadow grassland, historic green lanes and landscapes associated with a series of varied water features.</p> <p>As part of the recreation provision there will be formalised play areas.</p>	<p>and localised. The magnitude of effect is <b>mid-range</b> and <b>adverse</b>.</p> <p>Post construction and with the completion of the development the extensive provision of new hedgerows and tree belts results in a <b>higher</b> range, <b>beneficial</b> magnitude of change.</p>
Off-Site Living Landscapes Project	The sensitivity of the Off-site living landscapes project, to the development proposed, is <b>mid-way</b> on the range (C).	<p>There will be no physical impact on the areas within the Living Landscapes Project to the east of the Site.</p> <p>In line with the project's vision, it has influenced the planning (and design) process to minimise adverse impacts of development and maximise the benefits.</p> <p>During the construction phase there will be localised disturbance to the area as a result of the on-site activities. The degree of disturbance will be the subject to a CEMP.</p>	<p>In line with the Living Landscapes Project (see Ecological Impact Assessment in respect of wildlife components of the 'vision') the proposals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide improved access within the landscape to connect the landscape to a wider range of local people.</li> <li>• Promote the value of the landscape and opportunities for information recreation for visitors.</li> </ul>	<p>During the construction phase the impacts will be indirect adverse, short-term, and localised. The magnitude of effect is within the <b>low-range</b> of the spectrum and <b>adverse</b>.</p> <p>The completed development will provide localised <b>benefits</b> and the magnitude of the change will be at the <b>lower</b> end of the spectrum.</p>
New landscape resources provided by the proposals which are not currently found within the Site			<p><b>Water features:</b></p> <p>In addition to retaining the fish lake and enhancing its immediate context the proposals will create a number of new water features providing for ecological and recreation benefits.</p> <p><b>Provision of community orchards and allotments:</b></p> <p>These are new features incorporated to enhance and increase the functionality of the green infrastructure for the benefit of the new and existing residents of this part of the settlement.</p>	<p>The provision of both new landscape features is beneficial to the environment and people using the spaces within the settlement edge.</p> <p>The magnitude of change is at the <b>higher</b> end of the range, <b>beneficial</b> magnitude of change.</p>





Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Magnitude of visual change

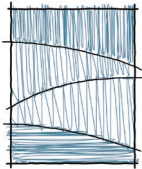
5.11 At the lower end of the spectrum the visual change may be small scale with no notable loss or addition to the view, the change is consistent with the baseline context and will not give rise a contrast in elements, form, colour and line, whilst the

views are likely to be fleeting, glimpsed, or viewed infrequently. At the higher end of the spectrum the changes will be large scale, with losses of key elements in the view and/or additional features which may be incongruent in the composition. There is likely to be contrast in scale, form, line and colour and the changes will affect a large proportion of the view, be fully

visible. The duration of the view is likely to be prolonged and frequent.

Table 5.2: Magnitude of visual change

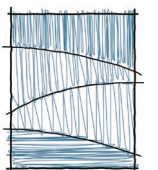
Visual Receptor	Sensitivity – set out in Section 3 above	Description of change  Construction Phase	Completed Development	Magnitude of effect
Users of PROW BENF_7	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is within the <b>mid-range</b> of the spectrum (C).	During the construction phase the views from this footpath (which has a relatively open aspect) will be the subject of regular change, including seeing activities and elements which are incongruent with the baseline situation.	Once complete the foreground of the views will be open/undeveloped, comprising areas of rough grassland, trees, and areas of open water. Housing will be visible but filtered by the vegetation.  The views will be foreshortened by the proposals, but the elements will create an aesthetically pleasing visual composition.	The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the <b>higher</b> end of the spectrum and <b>adverse</b> in nature.  On completion the magnitude of change will be <b>neutral</b> in nature (comprising mixed elements with a 'green' foreground) and at the <b>mid-high range</b> of the spectrum.
Residents fronting Firfield Road	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is within the <b>mid to high range</b> of the spectrum (D).	Construction activities, equipment and the phasing of change will result in notable and frequent changes in views, The boundaries will be affected in phased and not a constant change for the 6 year construction phase.  The change in view will be primarily experienced from first floor windows, as people look above fences and through tree canopies. However, the visual and perceptual change is likely to be experienced from ground floor rear facing windows (forward facing from Firfield Road) to some degree.	For these residents the change will be a complete change in outlook, open farmland will be replaced by housing and gardens.  In planning terms there is no right to a view, but the detailed design will need to ensure no impacts on the residential amenity of the existing properties.	The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the <b>higher</b> end of the spectrum and <b>adverse</b> in nature.  On completion the magnitude of change will be <b>adverse</b> in nature (comprising mixed elements with a 'green' foreground) and at the <b>higher</b> end of the spectrum.
Residents on Asquith Gardens backing onto the Site – generally open views				
Residents on Daws Heath Road backing onto the Site – Views from the properties typically filtered by trees in the domestic gardens.			The rear gardens of properties are substantially larger than those on Asquith Avenue and Firfield Road, furthermore they are typically well vegetated. The new housing will be set back from the rear boundaries of the properties on Daws Heath Road with extensive new tree planting in the intervening space.  Views will change but will be increasingly vegetated, minimising views of the new buildings.	The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the <b>higher</b> end of the spectrum and <b>adverse</b> in nature.  On completion the magnitude of change will be <b>neutral</b> in nature (comprising mixed elements with a 'green' foreground) and at the <b>mid-high range</b> of the spectrum.





# Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity – set out in Section 3 above	Description of change Construction Phase	Completed Development	Magnitude of effect
People traveling on Daws Heath Road adjacent to the equestrian facilities,	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is at the <b>lowest</b> end of the spectrum (A).	During the construction phase the views from this road will be the subject of regular change, including seeing activities and elements which are incongruent with the baseline situation. Such change will be glimpsed through the existing trees and built-up street frontage.	Once completed the development will read as a continuum of the existing visual composition, with housing interspersed with open and vegetated open spaces. New tree planting on the boundary of the Site will filter and soften views of the housing.	<p>The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the <b>higher</b> end of the spectrum and <b>adverse</b> in nature.</p> <p>On completion the magnitude of change will be <b>neutral</b> in nature (comprising mixed elements with a 'green' foreground) and at the <b>lower range</b> of the spectrum.</p>
Those visiting and working in the retail park north of the Site	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is at the <b>lowest</b> end of the spectrum (A).	Construction of the access will result in the removal of a number of trees and opening up of the visual composition.	The new access will create a more open environment with views into the woodland/entrance space softening the visual environment compared to the baseline.	<p>The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the <b>higher</b> end of the spectrum and <b>adverse</b> in nature.</p> <p>On completion the magnitude of change will be <b>neutral</b> in nature (comprising mixed elements with a 'green' foreground) and at the <b>lower</b> end of the spectrum.</p>
Impact on off-site landmark	This is not a protected view.		Views of the church spire is not a visual receptor, but it is a landmark in views out from the site. The road network is aligned to maintain this visual link. The context of the view and the foreground will be altered.	<p>The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the <b>higher</b> end of the spectrum and <b>adverse</b> in nature.</p> <p>On completion the magnitude of change will be <b>neutral</b> in nature (comprising mixed elements with a 'green' foreground) and at the <b>lower</b> end of the spectrum.</p>





## Section 6: Significance of effects

### General overview

- 6.1 The determination of significance is a function of the sensitivity of the landscape resource or visual receptor (section 3) and the magnitude of change that resource or receptor experiences. These issues are combined to inform the judgement on the overall significance of effect.
- 6.2 The summary of landscape and visual effects is set out in **Appendix 5** which should read alongside this summary section. To understand the context to the level of significance assigned through this process, the effects do not relate to nationally, regionally, or locally protected landscapes, landscape assets and views. The landscape effects are highly localised and are associated with resources of predominately mid to lower sensitivity resources.
- 6.3 Furthermore, as illustrated by the visual mapping at Figure 2.8, within the highly contained and limited visual envelope only those residents immediately abutting the site will experience significant visual effects.
- 6.4 As expected, the greatest degree of change and disruption will be experienced during the construction phase, both in respect of the landscape, character, its features, and elements, any the visual environment for people living and moving around the area.

### Significance of landscape effects

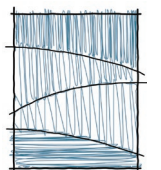
- 6.5 During the construction phase of the development programme there will be continuous change to the landscape (in terms of both construction on site and construction movements in the local area). It is generally recognised that this is the most disruptive phase of development. In terms of the character of the site and its immediate context, the character of the area will experience localised and notable change with the introduction of elements and features associated with the construction process which are uncharacteristic. The construction activities will give rise to significant and adverse effects. This disruption will last for the duration of the build programme. The construction effects for all of the landscape receptors will be temporary in nature.

- 6.6 The permanent (post implementation and establishment of the landscape measures – years 5 onwards) significant landscape effects identified by this assessment process relate to:
- Mature hedgerows
  - Woodlands
  - Informal routes and green lane
  - Water features
  - Community orchards
  - Allotments
- 6.7 In all instances these effects will be beneficial to the newly emerging townscape and its community of users. The effects will be localised and not experienced beyond the settlement and local landscape. The development will bring about significant beneficial effects through the delivery of the multifunctional green infrastructure.
- 6.8 The adverse effect on the character of the site, through the development of the settlement expansion in accordance with the emerging local plan, is balanced against the creation of a character of townscape which draws from and complements the local context. Furthermore, the new settlement edge provides for notable new and enhanced landscape features to the betterment of the townscape qualities.
- 6.9 By the nature of the containment by the existing land uses and landform the landscape effects are highly localised.

### Significance of visual effects

- 6.10 During the construction phase of the development programme there will be continuous change to the views experienced by residents and those moving around the area. It is generally recognised that this is the most disruptive phase of development. The views will include incongruent elements, such as scaffolding, construction vehicles and plant. The viewers will experience frequent change on a daily basis; however, the duration of this change during the construction phase is temporary and short- term.
- 6.11 Significant, adverse, and permanent visual effects will occur in respect of those residents adjoining or in close proximity to the site. This specifically relates to:
- Residents fronting Firfield Road
  - Residents on Asquith Gardens

- 6.12 Significant visual effects are highly localised and confined to the residents on the boundary immediately adjacent to the site. Not only is this a geographically limited group of people, but the number of receptors, in the context of the wider townscape and visual environment is comparably small.





## Section 7: Summary

7.1 It is acknowledged that any development of greenfield locations for new housing will give rise to landscape and visual change. The fact that change will occur is not in itself harmful or adverse, such change has created the settlements and street scenes that are valued by communities and the people that live in them. It is inevitable that the most appropriate location for new homes, of the scale required will be in the 'open countryside' abutting settlements across the district.

7.2 In this instance the site had been identified by the Council as a suitable and appropriate location for new housing and it was being promoted for a new housing allocation in the Local Plan, until this was withdrawn.

7.3 In respect of the natural environment, as a point of fact, the site is not covered by specific policies listed in the NPPF, paragraph 11, footnote 7, including:

- SSSI;
- Habitat Sites;
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- National Park;
- Heritage Coast;
- Irreplaceable habitats;
- Areas at risk of flooding or coastal change; and
- Designated heritage assets.

7.4 In respect of NPPF Paragraph 174 b) the landscape character of the area has been recognised in the development of the proposals. This is not a valued landscape (NPPF 174 a)

7.5 The locational benefits of the Site can be summarised as:

- Located abutting the settlement edge, utilising the existing infrastructure;
- Outwith any national statutorily designated landscape;
- Outwith the setting of a statutorily designated landscape;
- Not within or near other designated landscapes, such as Ancient Woodland or Registered Historic Parks and Gardens;
- Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area;
- Not within an NPPF 'valued landscape.'

7.6 The applicant has commissioned a wide range of technical specialists to evaluate the site's capacity and the most appropriate development response.

*The masterplan has been informed by extensive, comprehensive, and detailed technical analysis across a range of disciplines. The team's collaborative design approach has responded positively to the environmental requirements. The new settlement edge is permeable in terms of access and visibility, rich in landscape assets and delivers a variety of spaces, functions, and environmental benefits.*

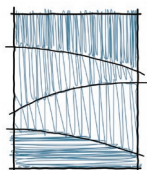
7.7 This approach enables a design solution which embraces the aims of paragraph 98 of the NPPF, namely:

*Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport, and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.*

7.8 The applicant's team has taken a robust approach to the analysis of the locale, its technical constraints and relationship with the settlement edge, to create a complementary area of new housing within a connected framework of multifunctional green infrastructure serving the local and wider community. The collaborative approach to the project is important as it enables a comprehensive solution to growth.

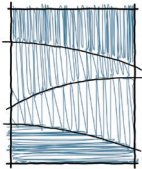
7.9 The proposals respond positively to their location and have adopted a landscape-led approach to masterplanning. As a result, the proposals deliver significant and beneficial landscape effects, to be balanced against highly localised and limited effects on the visual environment for the majority of the community of Thundersley.

7.10 No effects are of national, regional or district significance. The landscape and visual effects identified are highly localised.





Appendix 1: Parameters Plan





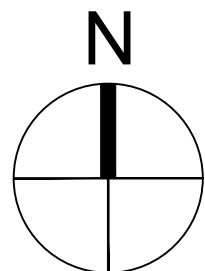


Contractors and consultants are not to scale dimensions from this drawing

KEY

- Application site area - 27.89ha
- Up to 2 Storey - Max 11m
- Up to 3 Storey - Max 13m
- Multi functional open space - Including all elements of multi functional open space, as described in the Design and Access Statement.

NB: Building Heights in Metres to the ridgeline from the Finished Floor Level (FFL). Additional elements (e.g. chimneys) may protrude by a further 1m above ridgeline.



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Revision	Date	Description
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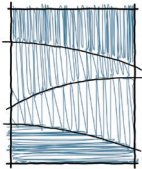
Client  
**This Land**  
Project  
**Land East of Rayleigh Road  
Thundersley**  
Description  
**Proposed Parameter Plan  
Building Scale**

Status	Preliminary	
Scale	Drawn By	Date
1:2000@A1	MJ	Nov 22
Job Number	Drawing Number	Revision
34580	302	J

Original size 100mm @ A1 Copyright Broadway Malayan Limited



**Appendix 2: Screening Opinion –  
Landscape matters highlighted**







**Planning Services**

**Castle Point Borough Council**

Council Offices, Kiln Road,

Thundersley, Benfleet,

Essex SS7 1TF

[liamryder@codedp.co.uk](mailto:liamryder@codedp.co.uk)

Application Reference 21/0380/SCREEN

**SCREENING OPINION  
REGULATION 6**

**THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017  
(as amended)**

**CODE Development Planners Ltd.  
Land East of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley, Essex**

**Note**

The site is identified under Policy HO13 of the submitted Local Plan as a site suitable for release from the Green Belt. The policy (as modified) identifies that the site is allocated for residential purposes, to deliver around 455 new homes and associated infrastructure by 2033. A Master Plan approach is to be adopted to ensure that the development of the site achieves the objectives of Policy HO13.

The submitted Local Plan is currently at Examination.

**Description of Development**

A request has been received from CODE Development Planners Ltd. for an opinion on whether the proposed residential development for up to 500 dwellings and associated infrastructure at Land East of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley will require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

The request is accompanied by a plan identifying the land in question, a description of the proposed works and an analysis of the possible effects the proposed works may have on the environment.

All information referred to is based on information provided by CODE Development Planners Ltd. in their letter and accompanying documentation dated 16<sup>th</sup> April 2021 and received by the LPA on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

**Site Location**

The site is located to the south of Stadium Way, to the north of Daws Heath Road and to the east of Rayleigh Road in Thundersley, Essex.

To the north, the site is bordered with commercial development such as Essex Auto Group Show Room and workshops, and beyond Stadium Way a Sainsbury's food store and a large area of retail warehousing, providing a wide range of goods. There is an Essex Fire and Rescue Station adjoining the site in the far north western corner. To the west lies residential development fronting Rayleigh road, Asquith Gardens, Asquith Avenue and Firfield Road whilst to the south is residential development fronting Daws Heath Road. To the east of the site is the Little Havens Hospice site and a network of fields leading to the A127.

The site has an area of some 28.36 hectares and is bounded on its eastern edge by trees subject of TPO 12/91

The site is located within 200m of Thundersley Great Common SSSI to the east and 1.3km from Great Wood and Dodds Grove SSSI to the west. The Benfleet and Southend Marshes SSSI is located some 2.2km to the south.

Within the south eastern part of the site, land identified as an Ancient Landscape within the Adopted Local Plan (1998) is located. This allocation has been included in the submitted Local Plan as Historic Natural Landscape. The Little Havens Nature Reserve is located immediately to the east of the site.

The site lies within the Daws Heath Road and Pound Wood Historic Character Area, which has the following historic landscape character:

*'a remarkable survival of a historic pattern of irregular small fields and ancient woodland, Pound Wood, Tile Wood and Starvelarks Wood. Significant elements of the woods are managed as nature reserves. The zone is bounded to the north by the Southend Arterial Road (A127) ... There are a range of earthwork woodland boundaries and other earthworks within the woods.'* (Essex County Council, 2007).

The attractive nature of the site is further stated in the Castle Point Borough Green Belt Review – Part 2 2018 (Updated 2019) which states:

*'The proposed housing site is comprised of predominantly open fields with internal field boundaries marked by hedgerows. The site contains a farm and an associated depot but is otherwise free of built development. The site also contains a reservoir and is crossed by tracks.'*

On the basis of the proximity of adjacent sites with environmental sensitivity and historic nature of the landscape, the application site is considered to be locally sensitive.

**The Proposal**

The applicant identifies that the site will be developed for:

- up to 500 residential (Use Class C3) dwellings, including affordable housing
- Vehicular and pedestrian access points from Stadium Way to the north of the site and from Daws Heath Road to the south
- Public open space, landscape planting and children's play facilities
- Land for an early year's childcare facility
- Land for a new healthcare facility
- A multi-use community building
- Engineering works to facilitate a sustainable drainage system.

**Does the Proposal require the submission of an Environmental Statement?**

Consideration of the proposal in the light of Schedules 1 and 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendments) 2017 Regulations has revealed that the proposal is not a development type listed in Schedule 1 of the Regulations.

The proposal is however considered to fall within the class of development identified under paragraph 10(b) 'Urban Development Projects' of Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations.

The proposal exceeds the criteria for the purpose of classifying development as a Schedule 2 development because the development proposal provides more than 150 dwellings and the overall area proposed for development exceeds 5 hectares.

**Is an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) required for the proposed development?**



The Planning Authority has been requested to provide a formal screening opinion as to whether the above development is likely to have significant effects on the environment such that an Environmental Impact Assessment should be carried out and an Environmental Statement submitted.

This screening opinion considers the selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 development as set out in Schedule 3 to the Regulations.

This screening opinion is based on the information contained in the letter and associated documentation dated 16<sup>th</sup> April 2021 and received by the LPA on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021 provided by CODE Development Planners Ltd.

Although the proposal is defined as a Schedule 2 Development, the need for an EIA is not automatic.

### **The Screening Opinion**

The fundamental test when assessing the need for an EIA is whether the proposal is likely to have 'significant effects' on the environment by virtue of the characteristics of the development, the location of development and the characteristics of the potential impact.

The National Planning Policy Guidance and Schedule 3 of the Regulations provide criteria to be considered as part of the screening process. Further guidance is provided by the Town and Country Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017 screening matrix.

Against this background the Planning Authority has undertaken an assessment of the need for an EIA against each of the key considerations relevant to this site.

#### **1. Characteristics of development**

##### **(a) The size and scale of the development**

The site is approximately 28.36 hectares in area. The applicant seeks to provide up to 500 homes together with the provision of a strategic public open space, land for an early year's childcare facility, land for a new healthcare facility and a multi-use community building.

Whilst in national or regional terms the development of a 28.36ha site is perhaps not significant, in local terms the proposal does represent a significant development proposal. Consideration must be given to whether the impact of such development on the local environment is similarly significant.

The site is proposed to be allocated in the emerging Castle Point Local Plan for development. This will involve removal of the site from the Green Belt. The site is currently formed by open fields. Development on the site, as proposed in the emerging Local Plan will change the character of the land to urban. This will change the appearance of the site from the surrounding areas and, therefore, a landscape impact assessment will be required.

Government guidance makes it clear for undeveloped sites providing less than 1000 dwellings EIA would not normally be required. The current scheme seeks to provide up to 500 dwellings and as such is significantly smaller in scale than the advice suggests would be appropriate for consideration under EIA requirements. In the absence of any strongly identified harm to the character of the area, a need for EIA is not identified in this case.

The applicant has acknowledged that the site includes a historic natural landscape and identifies that a landscape and visual impact assessment will be undertaken. It is suggested within the submission that any impact on the landscape 'will be balanced by the positive enhancement of the landscape quality'.

Government guidance is clear that mitigation of potential impacts should be considered in the determination of the need for EIA. It is the view of the Local Planning Authority that significant adverse impacts on the historic landscape can be adequately mitigated through the Master Plan process identified within Policy HO13 and through the imposition of appropriate conditions on the grant of any consent.

Subject to such mitigation the impact on the historic landscape is not considered likely to be so significant as to require EIA.

##### **(b) Cumulation with other existing development and/or approved development**

The submitted Local Plan identifies 24 urban and non-urban sites for the purpose of meeting the Borough's objectively assessed housing needs to 2033. The plan identifies land for 5,367 new homes. In identifying this capacity consideration was given to the extent of environmental constraints within the Borough, including nature conservation, design, areas of historic and landscape value and flood risk as well as the implications for the Green Belt, economic growth, biodiversity, water quality and quantity, Highways and air quality. The sites identified are considered deliverable or developable and it is the view of the Local Planning Authority that with appropriate mitigation no adverse cumulative impacts would arise from the development of the identified sites.

##### **(c) The use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity**

Other than the natural resources used during the construction process, which are not expected to be significantly different in form and scale than those utilised in the development of other sites, no significant environmental impacts are anticipated during the construction phase of the proposed development.

With appropriate energy and water efficient mechanisms installed during the construction period, which can be secured by condition, no a significant adverse impact on energy and water supplies are anticipated.

The scale of demand for such utilities during the operational phase is considered capable being satisfactorily accommodated without significant impact on the environment.

None of the site has been identified as a Local Wildlife Site and whilst the site has some wildlife/habitat value it is considered unlikely that the mitigated loss of this site to development would have a significant direct adverse impact on biodiversity. Capacity exists on adjoining land, and within the site itself, to accommodate the needs of wildlife. In this context therefore, whilst some impact is inevitable, it is not considered that it is so significant to require the submission of an EIA.

The Council is seeking a landscape led approach to the master plan which will help mitigate impacts.

It is considered that development of the site in the manner proposed would have an adverse impact on European designated sites. Consideration of this impact appears under section 2(c) of this report.

##### **(d) The production of waste**

Given the limited built development currently present on the site, it is considered unlikely that the initial stages of the construction phase could give rise to significant levels of waste being generated or removed from the site. Any waste generated by the construction phase would be subject to an appropriate Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which would be secured by condition. Subject to proper control it is not considered that waste production during the construction phase would have a significant adverse impact on the environment sufficient to warrant EIA.

During the operational phase the proposed development is not expected to generate disproportionately high or unusual levels of waste. Conditions securing the appropriate storage and disposal of waste materials can be attached to the grant of any consent. Mitigated in this manner it is not considered that the production of waste justifies EIA.

The proposed use of the site is mainly residential which is unlikely to result in any significant emissions or waste. It is not considered that the development of the site is likely to result in the introduction of new pollutants, significant noise, introduction of new hazardous materials to the area, high risk of major accidents or pose a risk to human health. On this basis the submission of an EIA is not required.

##### **(e) Pollution and nuisances**

The site currently contains a limited number of buildings some of which are known to support industrial processes. Potential contamination the land arising under such used is currently unknown however, appropriate studies can be undertaken in the preparation of the planning application and appropriate mitigation measures identified and implemented. Given the limited extent of contamination likely to be encountered EIA is not considered necessary for this aspect of the proposal.



It is noted that during construction there is an increased likelihood that adverse impacts such as noise, vibration and construction traffic are likely to occur. Disturbances such as these are however transient and will stop when construction ends. Furthermore, an appropriate construction management plan would further mitigate these adverse impacts.

During the operational phase there is likely to be some noise pollution generated by the residential users of the site however given the context of the site adjacent to the urban settlement of Thundersley it is not considered that the scale and nature of such noise would be inconsistent with an experienced in adjoining residential areas. EIA is not considered necessary in this regard.

Government guidance is clear (paragraph 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework) that existing businesses should not have unreasonable restrictions imposed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established

Land to the north the proposal site currently supports a number of businesses within the Rayleigh Weir trading estate. The proposed development would inevitably alter the environment in which these businesses operate by locating noise sensitive receptors in close proximity, albeit mainly retail warehousing. This could represent an adverse environmental impact on adjoining uses. In order to mitigate such impact it is essential that any proposal for the development of the site consider and mitigate the impact of the proposed development on that existing. It is considered that such impact may be satisfactory mitigated through the Master Plan process. EIA would not therefore be required on this basis.

The works proposed do not indicate that there would be the generation or release of toxic or hazardous substances.

(f) The risk of major accidents and/or disasters relevant to the development concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge

The site is not located in proximity of any sites identified as a major accident or disaster risk. No assessment of such risk is therefore considered necessary.

The Site is located within Flood Zone 1 which indicates a low risk of flooding. The site is over 1ha in size and a flood risk assessment (FRA) would be required to accompany any planning application. This will be expected to identify and mitigate any surface water drainage issues arising from development of the site including the impact of climate change and implications for offsite flooding. Subject to an appropriate FRA and guided by the Master Plan and appropriate conditions, all adverse implications arising as a result flood risk and surface water drainage are considered capable of adequate mitigation. EIA is not required on this basis. .

(g) The risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution)

*Air Quality*

The 2020 Air Quality Annual Status Report provides an overview of air quality in Castle Point during 2019. The results showed that in 2019 Castle Point Borough Council measured no exceedances of the Air Quality Objectives at relevant exposure and that air pollution levels across the Borough were exhibiting a downward trend, indicating improved air quality.

In respect of impact on the proposed development, it should be noted that the main source of air pollution present in the Borough is from traffic emissions, particularly along the A127 and at key junctions such as the A127 Rayleigh Weir. As this key junction is located some 275m from the northern boundary of the site it is particularly relevant to the site. It must be noted however that at present there are no air quality management areas within the Borough.

The construction phase of the proposed development is likely to generate vehicle movements and dust to the potential detriment of air quality. However, the scale of development is not so large, or the anticipated levels of emissions of particulates so high, that it is not considered that these could be satisfactorily mitigated through an agreed CEMP. Subject to an appropriate CEMP EIA is not sought on this basis.

During the operational phase it is recognised that increased emissions may be likely as a consequence of increased traffic movements associated with the occupation of the site. It is not considered however that the scale of development is so significant to suggest that such emissions would necessitate EIA. The Council will expect an air quality assessment to be submitted as part of the planning application.

*Water Quality*

Subject to the proposal meeting the objectives of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), which can be monitored through the Master Plan process, it is not considered that EIA is required.

**2. Location of development**

**(a) The existing and approved land use**

The site has in the past been used for agricultural purposes. However, this appears to have been curtailed many years ago. At the present time the land appears to be partly used for commercial storage purposes not related to agriculture and partly managed for agricultural and recreational purposes.

The applicant seeks consent for the development of the site with up to 500 residential dwellings and associated infrastructure.

The land is of poor agricultural quality and commercial uses which provide limited economic benefits. It is not therefore considered that the loss of the existing land uses is environmentally sensitive and would attract a requirement for an EIA.

**(b) The relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground**

The site has not been identified as falling within a SSSI, an AONB, a National Park, an international conservation site, a World Heritage Site or an area to which Nature Conservation Orders apply. The site therefore has not been identified as 'sensitive' in national or international terms. In principle therefore, national guidance as set out in the NPPG suggests that an EIA is unlikely to be required.

**(c) The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:**

**(i) *Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths***

Not applicable

**(ii) *Coastal zones and the marine environment;***

Not applicable

**(iii) *Mountain and forest areas;***

Not applicable

**(iv) *Nature reserves and parks;***

The proposal site is located to the west of the Little Havens Nature Reserve. The area has the potential to be adversely affected by emissions during the construction phase. Whilst of high local value, the nature reserve is not of national significance and it is considered that an appropriate CEMP would adequately mitigate any emissions impact.

During the operational phase use of the site is considered likely to generate increased foot fall within the reserve. This increased pressure will need to be appropriately managed and mitigated. It is considered this may be achieved through the provision of alternative natural open spaces within the proposal site, the achievement of which can be secured through the Master Plan process, the use of appropriate conditions and potentially a S106 agreement. Subject to such mitigation EIA is not considered necessary.

**(v) *European sites and other areas classified or protected under national legislation;***

Work undertaken by Natural England has identified that all residential development within identified Zones of influence around designated sites, has the capacity to adversely impact on designated sites as a consequence of disturbance through increased footfall.

The proposal site falls within the identified Zone of Influence. The development of the site therefore has the potential to adversely impact on nearby European sites as previously identified.

In order to mitigate the impact of proposed development on designated sites, this Authority, in association with 11 other authorities in Essex, has adopted the Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS). This document seeks to support sustainable residential growth while protecting Habitats sites and their wildlife from the increased disturbance from recreation associated with a growth in population. It does not seek



to mitigate the impact of development on individual sites which in appropriate cases such as this, will also be required to be the subject of site specific mitigation.

The Habitat Regulations Assessment undertaken by Essex County Council Place Services on behalf of Castle Point Borough Council identified that whilst the proposal would adversely impact on the designated site, the provision of the green infrastructure needed for the daily recreational requirements of new residents within the site would be likely to direct and deflect visitors from the Habitat sites.

The Local Planning Authority of the view that sufficient opportunities exist within the proposal site to secure appropriate alternative natural open space to deflect/indirect residents away from the Habitat sites and to secure appropriate mitigation of impacts on the ecology of the proposal site. The extent of such provision would need to be determined through the local level Habitat Regulations Assessment, but appropriately mitigated, which can be managed through the Master Plan process and the approval and implementation of environmental, landscape and ecology management plans, it is not considered that significant adverse impacts necessitating EIA will arise.

(vi) *Areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure.*  
Not applicable

(vii) *Densely populated areas;*  
The proposal will extend the existing urban area with residential development and associated infrastructure. It is proposed to provide strategic open space within the scheme although no details of this have been provided. It is considered that the provision of open space within the scheme will mitigate to some degree the impact of the proposal on the capacity of existing open space in the area which has been identified as limited in availability.

The surrounding area comprises a densely developed urban fringe which suffers from limited highway capacity. It is not considered that the existing highway network could accommodate the proposed development without some mitigation, and junction improvements are considered likely to be necessary at both the Stadium Way/Rayleigh Road junction and the Woodman's Arms Junction of Daws Heath Road with Rayleigh Road.

No information has been provided by the applicant in respect of the capacity of the highway network and within the context of consideration of this request for a screening opinion, no consultation has been undertaken in this respect by the Local Planning Authority. It is known however, following the receipt of transport sensitivity analysis for HO13 that the Woodman's Arms junction is currently performing above the theoretical threshold. Development at the proposal site is likely to exacerbate the situation. However, whilst the proposed development will clearly have an impact on traffic flows in the area it is not considered that this impact is so significant as to require EIA. The transport impact assessment will need to address the impacts on the highways network.

In terms of the capacity of education provision Essex County Council has identified a requirement for additional early years and childcare nursery provision to meet the needs of the site. This need can be accommodated within the Master Plan process. The limited extent of the identified need does not necessitate EIA.

In terms of community and health facilities it is known that a need for further provision exists however the extent of need is not of national significance and will be accommodated within the Master Plan process. The identified need is not considered to necessitate EIA.

(viii) *Landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.*

The proposal site exhibits a significant fall across the site which facilitates good views of local landmarks, as well as good areas of natural vegetation and features of local ecological and historical interest. These aspects of the landscape, whilst attractive, are of insufficient quality to elevate the site to one of national landscape significance, although the features identified are locally important. It is considered that the loss of these features would have an adverse impact on the landscape and whilst consideration of such loss does not, in the view of the Local Planning Authority necessitate EIA, the retention and/or the mitigation of such impact through the Master Plan process is considered essential.

## Types and characteristics of the potential impact

(a) The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected

The geographical and population impact of the proposed development will be localised and in the view of the Local Planning Authority does not attract a requirement for EIA.

### (b) The nature of the impact

It is considered that the potential impact likely to be caused by the proposal can be mitigated through the Master Plan process and the application process and does not necessitate an EIA.

### (c) The transboundary nature of the impact

The application is not considered to have an impact on another EEA State and therefore does not require an EIA on this basis.

### (d) The intensity and complexity of the impact

It is not considered that the potential impacts of the proposed development are unduly complex or intense. It is not therefore considered that EIA is required on this basis.

### (e) The probability of the impact

Whilst the probability of impact is high, the magnitude of the impact is considered limited. All identified impacts can be adequately mitigated through the Master Plan and planning process. EIA is not required.

### (f) The expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact

Whilst locally adverse impacts are anticipated throughout the construction period and thereafter, it is considered that adequate mitigation can be incorporated into the scheme to ensure appropriate reversibility.

It is not considered that issues of onset, duration, frequency or reversibility provide sufficient justification for EIA.

### (g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development

The submitted Local Plan is currently at Examination. If found sound there is the potential for a number of sites allocated for residential purposes to come forward within the locality of the proposal. As indicated above however, it is the view of the Planning Authority that the cumulative impact of these sites can be adequately mitigated.

### (h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact

It is considered that the mitigation of impacts can be appropriately achieved through the Master Plan and planning process. It is not considered that the effective reduction of impact would be facilitated by EIA.

## Conclusion

From an analysis of the information submitted by the applicant, the Local Planning Authority is of the formal opinion that the proposed development, either independently or cumulatively with the development of other sites, is unlikely to have such significant effects on the environment that an EIA should be carried out and an Environmental statement submitted.

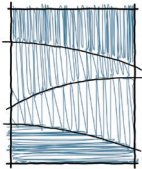
## Decision

For the above reasons it is determined that an Environmental Statement is not required for the above development.

K. Fisher-Bright  
06.05.2021



Appendix 3: Glossary

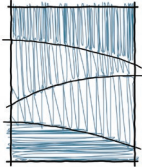




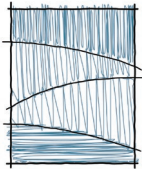
# Land east of Rayleigh Road, Thundersley: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

## Glossary

<b>Character</b>	A distinct, recognisable, and consistent pattern of elements, features and qualities in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.	<b>Landscape</b>	An area, as perceived by people, the character of which is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.		of the receptor to the specific type of change or development
		<b>Landscape Character Areas</b>	These are single unique areas which are the discrete geographical areas if a particular landscape type.	<b>Significance</b>	proposed and the value related to that receptor.  A measure of the importance or gravity of the environmental effect defined by significance criteria specific to the environmental topic.
<b>Characteristics / elements</b>	Features and qualities which make a particular contribution to distinctive character.	<b>Landscape effects</b>	Effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right.	<b>Susceptibility</b>	The ability of a defined landscape and visual receptor to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences.
<b>Characterisation</b>	The process of identifying areas of similar character, classifying, and mapping them and describing their character.	<b>Landscape quality (condition)</b>	A measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements.	<b>Visual Amenity</b>	The overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting, or travelling through an area.
<b>Effects</b>	These are the effects that result from the impacts (changes) of the proposed development. Direct effects are directly attributable to the proposed development, Indirect effects result indirectly from the proposed project but are because of the direct impacts, often occurring away from the Site, or because of a sequence of interrelationships or a complex pathway. They may be separated by distance of in time from the source of the impacts.	<b>Landscape Value</b>	The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons.	<b>Visual effects</b>	Effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.
		<b>Magnitude (of effect)</b>	A term that combines judgements about the size and scale of the effect, the extent of the area over which it occurs, whether it is reversible or irreversible and whether it is short or long term in duration.	<b>Visual Envelope</b>	An area validated by fieldwork from which the Proposals are visible from, typically informed by the ZTV (see below).
<b>Element</b>	Individual component parts of the landscape such as field boundaries, woodlands, patches of similar vegetation, outbuildings, structures, and rock outcrops.	<b>Sense of Place</b>	The unique experience that arises because of being in or walking through a particular locality, generally as a response to the specific characteristics and quality of the area.	<b>Visual receptors</b>	Individuals and/or defined groups of people who have the potential to be affected by a proposal
<b>Feature</b>	Particularly prominent or eye-catching elements e.g., wooded hilltop or chapel, or a particular aspect of this project.	<b>Sensitivity (of Landscape)</b>	The inherent sensitivity of the landscape itself, irrespective of the type of change that may occur. In this project, it is divided into cultural, ecological, and visual sensitivity. A term applied to specific receptors, combining judgments of the susceptibility	<b>Visualisation</b>	A computer simulation, photomontage or other technique illustrating the predicted appearance of a development.
<b>Impacts</b>	The changes occurring because of the proposed development, the causation of effects.			<b>Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)</b>	A map showing areas of land within which a development is theoretically visible.
<b>Land Cover</b>	Combinations of natural and man-made elements including vegetation that cover the land surface.				



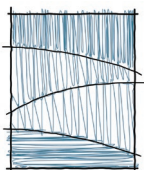
Appendix 4: Bibliography



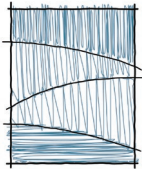


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**Appendix 5: Significance of Effects – Tables  
of Analysis**





Appendix 5: Summary of landscape and visual effects

Receptor/Resource	Sensitivity Range	Nature of Impact – considering overall effect on completion	Duration of Effect	Magnitude of Impact Range	Range of effect	Significant/not significant
Landscape effects						
Landscape of the Site in context of area 4	The sensitivity of the Site to the development proposed is <b>low to mid</b> way.	Adverse – change in land use, character and appearance from open fields to housing development.  Neutral in the long-term as the development will be physically, visually perceptually a component of the townscape, consistent with the experience from the settlement expansion to date.	Temporary construction effects  Permanent effects resulting from the development	During the construction phase the magnitude of change to the character of the site will be localised, phased, short term and adverse. The change lies towards the higher end of the spectrum.  On completion the primary change will be the introduction of elements consistent with the context. Whilst the character of the site will change, as with the current settlement, it will become assimilated in the physical and perceptual environment of the town. The magnitude of change is in the <b>mid-high</b> part of the spectrum.	<b>Construction phase</b> mid-high range of effects  <b>Completed development</b> mid-range of potential effects	Not significant
Landform	The sensitivity of the landform to the development proposed is <b>low</b> .	Neutral – no change to the primacy of the underlying landform, localised change	Temporary construction effects  Permanent effects resulting from the development	The changes both in the construction phases and on completion are highly localised but will be experienced over the long term. The design and treatment of the new landforms created are addressed below in terms of the new water features. The magnitude of change of the changes to the landform are adverse and at the <b>mid to low</b> part of the spectrum.	<b>Construction phase</b> mid-high range of effects  <b>Completed development</b> mid to lower range of the potential effects	Not significant
Mature hedgerows	The sensitivity of the hedgerows to the development proposed is <b>mid-high</b> .	Beneficial – loss compensated by greater new provision	Temporary construction effects  Permanent effects resulting from the development	During the construction phase the impacts will be adverse, short-term and localised. The magnitude of effect is mid-range and adverse.  Post construction and with the completion of the development the extensive provision of new hedgerows and tree belts results in a <b>mid-high</b> , beneficial magnitude of change.	<b>Construction phase</b> mid-high range of effects  <b>Completed development</b> mid-high range of potential effects	Significant
Woodlands	The sensitivity of the woodlands to the	Beneficial – loss compensated by greater	Temporary construction effects	During the construction phase the impacts will be adverse, short-term and localised.	<b>Construction phase</b> mid-high range of effects	Significant

	development proposed is <b>mid-high</b> .	new provision and appropriate management.	Permanent effects resulting from the development	<p>The magnitude of effect is mid-range and adverse.</p> <p>Post construction and with the completion of the development the extensive provision of new hedgerows and tree belts results in a <b>mid-high</b>, beneficial magnitude of change.</p>	Completed development mid-high range of potential effects	
Informal routes and green lane	The sensitivity of the routes, to the development proposed, is at the <b>low to mid</b> way range.	Beneficial – increase in quantum and quality with greater variation in pedestrian experiences and linkages	<p>Temporary construction effects</p> <p>Permanent effects resulting from the development</p>	<p>During the construction phase the impacts will be adverse, short-term and localised. The magnitude of effect is mid-range and adverse.</p> <p>Post construction and with the completion of the development the extensive provision of new hedgerows and tree belts results in a <b>higher range</b>, beneficial magnitude of change.</p>	<p>Construction phase mid-low range of effects</p> <p>Completed development mid-high range of potential effects</p>	Significant
Off-site living landscapes project	The sensitivity of the Off-site living landscapes project, to the development proposed, is <b>mid-way</b> on the range.	Neutral – some diminution of the view, but still an attractive outlook from the site.	<p>Temporary construction effects</p> <p>Permanent effects resulting from the development</p>	<p>During the construction phase the impacts will be indirect adverse, short-term and localised. The magnitude of effect is within the low-range of the spectrum and adverse.</p> <p>The completed development will provide localised benefits and the magnitude of the change will be at the <b>lower end</b> of the spectrum.</p>	<p>Construction phase mid-low range of effects</p> <p>Completed development low range of potential effects</p>	Not significant
<b>New assets</b>						
Water features	Serving a wide community of people and wildlife <b>high</b> end of the range	Beneficial	Permanent effects resulting from the development	<p>The provision of both new landscape features is beneficial to the environment and people using the spaces within the settlement edge.</p> <p>The magnitude of change is at the <b>higher</b> end of the range, beneficial magnitude of change.</p>	Completed development higher range of potential effects	Significant
Community orchards	Serving a wide community of people and wildlife <b>high</b> end of the range	Beneficial	Permanent effects resulting from the development		Completed development higher range of potential effects	Significant
allotments	Serving a wide community of people and wildlife <b>high</b> end of the range	Beneficial	Permanent effects resulting from the development		Completed development higher range of potential effects	Significant



Visual effects						
Users of PROW BENF_7	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is within the <b>mid-range</b> of the spectrum (C).	Neutral – whilst the views will change, the change is reflective of the context over time the visual experience will be the same as realised walking through the existing townscape.	Temporary construction effects  Permanent effects resulting from the development	The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the higher end of the spectrum and adverse in nature.  On completion the magnitude of change will be neutral in nature (comprising mixed elements with a 'green' foreground) and at the <b>mid-high</b> range of the spectrum.	<b>Construction phase</b> highest range of effects  <b>Completed development</b> mid-high range of potential effects	<b>Significant</b>
Residents fronting Firfield Road	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is within the <b>mid to high</b> range of the spectrum (D).	Adverse – change in outlook on a permanent basis, experienced daily.	Temporary construction effects  Permanent effects resulting from the development	The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the higher end of the spectrum and adverse in nature.  On completion the magnitude of change will be adverse in nature (comprising mixed elements with a 'green' foreground) and at the <b>higher end</b> of the spectrum.	<b>Construction phase</b> highest range of effects  <b>Completed development</b> higher range of potential effects	<b>Significant</b>
Residents on Asquith Gardens backing onto the Site – generally open views		Adverse – change in outlook on a permanent basis, experienced daily.			<b>Construction phase</b> highest range of effects  <b>Completed development</b> higher range of potential effects	<b>Significant</b>
Residents on Daws Heath Road backing onto the Site – Views from the properties typically filtered by trees in the domestic gardens.		Neutral – whilst there will be development in the view, the intervening area of land will be the subject of extensive landscaping filtering views beyond.		The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the higher end of the spectrum and adverse in nature.  On completion the magnitude of change will be neutral in nature (comprising mixed elements with a 'green' foreground) and at the <b>mid-high</b> range of the spectrum.	<b>Construction phase</b> highest range of effects  <b>Completed development</b> higher range of potential effects	<b>Significant</b>
People traveling on Daws Heath Road adjacent to the equestrian facilities,	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is at the <b>lowest end</b> of the spectrum (A).	Neutral – contextually these proposals will fit and maintain the sense of place experienced by people moving through the landscape.	Temporary construction effects  Permanent effects resulting from the development	The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the higher end of the spectrum and adverse in nature.  On completion the magnitude of change will be neutral in nature (comprising mixed elements with a 'green' foreground) and at the <b>lower range</b> of the spectrum.	<b>Construction phase</b> low range of effects  <b>Completed development</b> lower range of potential effects	Not significant
Those visiting and working in the retail park north of the Site	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is at the <b>lowest</b> end of the spectrum (A).	Neutral	Temporary construction effects	The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the higher end of the spectrum and adverse in nature.	<b>Construction phase</b> higher range of effects	Not significant

			Permanent effects resulting from the development	On completion the magnitude of change will be neutral in nature (comprising mixed elements with a 'green' foreground) and at the <b>lower end</b> of the spectrum.	Completed development lower range of potential effects	
Impact on off-site landmark	The sensitivity of the view is at the <b>lowest end</b> of the spectrum.	Neutral	Temporary construction effects  Permanent effects resulting from the development	The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the higher end of the spectrum and adverse in nature.  On completion the magnitude of change will be neutral in nature (comprising mixed elements with a 'green' foreground) and at the <b>lower end</b> of the spectrum.	Construction phase higher range of effects  Completed development lower range of potential effects	Not significant