

LAND AT

GILLINGHAM

DORSET

NEWHOUSE FARM AND HAM FARM



LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
DECEMBER 2017

LAND SOUTH OF GILLINGHAM
LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
WELBECK LAND
DECEMBER 2017



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Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.....	3
Introduction.....	3
Methodology and Scope.....	3
Baseline Environment.....	6
Mitigation within the Submitted Design (Primary mitigation)	11
Likely Significant Environmental Effects of the Scheme	12
Assessment Summary and Likely Significant Residual Environmental Effects	28
Potential Additional Mitigation, Compensation and Enhancement Measures (Secondary mitigation)	28
Glossary.....	32

Figure list

- 1.1 Topography
- 1.2 Environmental Designations
- 1.3 Landscape Character Areas – County
- 1.4 Masterplan
- 1.5 Building heights plan
- 1.6 Landscape strategy plan
- 1.7 Zone of theoretical visibility
- 1.8 Viewpoint Locations
- 1.9 Viewpoint 1 – Summer and winter
- 1.10 Viewpoint 2 - Summer and winter
- 1.11 Viewpoint 3 - Summer and winter
- 1.12 Viewpoint 4 - Summer and winter
- 1.13 Viewpoint 5 - Summer and winter
- 1.14 Viewpoint 6 - Summer and winter
- 1.15 Viewpoint 7 - Summer and winter

- A2.1 Assessment tables – Sensitivity of landscape receptor
- A2.2 Assessment tables – Magnitude of landscape change
- A2.3 Assessment tables – Significance of landscape effect
- A2.4 Assessment tables – Sensitivity of visual receptor
- A2.5 Assessment tables – Magnitude of visual change
- A2.6 Assessment tables – Significance of visual effect

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by Terence O'Rourke Ltd on behalf of Welbeck Land to assess the potential landscape and visual effects arising from the proposed mixed-use sustainable urban extension at land south of Gillingham. The purpose of this assessment is to identify, describe and assess the potential effects of the Proposed Development on the landscape and visual amenity of the Site and its surroundings.
- 1.2 This report and its associated figures and appendices should be read in conjunction with the Gillingham SSA environmental statement and information submitted in support of this planning application.
- 1.3 A 2.5km study area was chosen based on the zone of visual influence of the proposals, as the visibility beyond this distance will become limited and the Proposed Development is unlikely to have any significant effects outside of this 2.5km area.

Methodology and Scope

Policy Background

- 1.4 The Site lies within the administrative area of North Dorset district. The key planning documents applicable to the study area are at the national scale, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), and at the local scale, the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 adopted January 2016 and the North Dorset District Wide Local Plan 2003 (saved policies). A broad appraisal of these documents has been carried out identifying the key landscape related planning designations, as well as relevant nature conservation and cultural heritage designations that will also have an impact in terms of the landscape. These are illustrated on figure 1.2 and are summarised below. A full list of policy criteria can be found in appendix part 1.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the government's planning policies for England, the following of which are relevant to the landscape and visual assessment:

Core planning principles

- Paragraph 17 – the core planning principles relating to high quality design, the roles and character of different areas, effective use of land and conservation of heritage assets.

Requiring good design

- Paragraph 56 – the requirement for good design
- Paragraph 57 – achievement of high quality design including individual buildings, public and private spaces

- Paragraph 61 – connections between people and places and the integration of new development.

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

- Paragraph 109 – ways in which the planning system should contribute and enhance the natural and local environment
- Paragraph 113 – criteria based policies to judge development on or affecting protected wildlife or geodiversity sites.

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

- Paragraph 128 – description of the significance of any heritage assets affected
- Paragraph 131 – consideration of the effects of development on heritage assets
- Paragraph 132 – the importance of heritage assets in consideration of impact.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

- 1.6 The National Planning Practice Guidance is a web-based resource that supports the NPPF and contains government guidance, the following of which are relevant to the landscape and visual assessment:

- Paragraph 001 Ref ID: 8-001-20140306 – Landscape character
- Paragraph 007 Ref ID: 26-007-20140306 – Promoting local character
- Paragraph 009 Ref ID: 26-009-20140306 – Promoting network of green spaces.

Local plans

- 1.7 The North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 was adopted in January 2016. Policies contained within the local plan that are relevant to the landscape and visual assessment are as follows:

- **Policy 2** – Core Spatial Strategy
- **Policy 4** – The Natural Environment
- **Policy 5** – The Historic Environment
- **Policy 15** – Green Infrastructure
- **Policy 17** - Gillingham
- **Policy 20** – The Countryside
- **Policy 21** – Gillingham Strategic Site Allocation
- **Policy 24** – Design.

- 1.8 The following saved policies in the North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan, adopted in 2003, are relevant to the landscape and visual assessment:

- Policy 1.12 – River Valley
- Policy GH3 – Areas of Local Character
- Policy GH19 & GH20 – Riverside Amenity Areas, footpath/cycleway links
- Policy GRF1 – Gillingham Royal Forest.

Scoping Assessment Stage

- 1.9 A scoping opinion was requested and North Dorset District Council provided a scoping response on the 12th December 2014. The request for scoping opinion produced by WYG under the heading landscape and visual stated *"The site is varied in terms of its self-containment and visibility in terms of short views from the immediate surrounding urban/rural area and long views. Where long views of the site are possible, the layout will be able to mitigate environmental effects through the location and design of development. However, it is considered that the landscape and visual effects of the development are likely to require assessment as part of the ES."* North Dorset District Council stated under the heading landscape and visual impact *"as stated in your letter"*. No additional information was therefore required for the landscape and visual impact assessment other than as stated in the scoping request.

Assessment Methodology

- 1.10 The assessment judges the potential effects of the proposals on the landscape and visual receptors that have been identified. The significance of a landscape and visual effect is determined by consideration of the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors and the magnitude of the effect as a result of the Proposed Development. Further details of the methodology used in the assessment is set out in full in appendix part 2 and in figures A2.1 to A2.6 at the end of this report. Details of the methodology used in the photographic survey are set out in appendix part 3.
- 1.11 Landscape effects arise either from direct changes as a result of development in the physical elements of the receiving landscape, or from indirect effects on the character and quality of the surrounding landscape. The significance of a landscape effect is determined by consideration of the sensitivity of the landscape and the magnitude of change that it will undergo. The guidance in figures A2.1 and A2.2 has been used to arrive at an evaluation of landscape sensitivity and the predicted magnitude of change. The degree of effects on the landscape resource has been considered from a combined evaluation of landscape sensitivity and magnitude of change, using the matrix in figure A2.3. Effects that are moderate or above are considered to be significant for the EIA.
- 1.12 Visual effects arise from the changes in character and quality of people's views arising from the Proposed Development. The significance of an effect on visual amenity is determined by the consideration of the sensitivity of the receptor (the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view) and the magnitude of the change. The guidance in figure A2.4 has been used to arrive at an evaluation of the sensitivity of visual receptors, while figure A2.5 has been used in the assessment of the magnitude of change. The degree of visual effect has been determined from a consideration of receptor sensitivity and magnitude of change, using the matrix in figure A2.6. Effects that are moderate or above are considered to be significant for the EIA.

Baseline Environment

Existing landscape baseline

- 1.13 As part of the desktop assessment, previous classifications and evaluations of the surrounding landscape within the study area have been examined. The purpose of this was to assess whether the Site shares any of these common landscape characteristics and to assess how typical or unique the Site is within the landscape context. It also helps to understand the landscape characteristics of the study area and how the Site interacts with them.

National landscape character areas

- 1.14 Natural England's online National Character Area Profiles provide a description of the landscape character of the study area and the Site at its broadest level. The Site and surrounding 2.5km study area lies in national character area 133 Blackmore Vale and Vale of Wardour. The description of the landscape character area has the following key characteristics:

- *"A complex mosaic of mixed farming; lush clay vales dissected by a broken limestone ridge and fringed by Upper Greensand hills and scarps;*
- *Small irregular and rectilinear pasture fields with hedgerow oak trees and many scattered small broadleaved woodlands;*
- *Fragmented semi-natural habitats comprised mostly of damp, small grassland and scrub, and often relict areas of common;*
- *Predominantly clay surface geology (soils) leading to seasonally high water table with standing water in fields; many ditches and streams;*
- *Wooded Upper Greensand scarps and outliers, some with historic houses and parks;*
- *Broken low limestone ridges with shallow valleys, and steeper valleys around the margins of the area;*
- *Small villages and hamlets forming nuclei within a patchwork of fields, hedges, woods and trees, mostly derived from medieval settlement and land use;*
- *Many villages at the foot of the scarp, at river crossing points, on the Greensand springline, along the limestone ridge and at strategic sites;*
- *A wide variety of local building materials and techniques, including half timbering thatch, tile, Todber Freestone and Upper Greensand;*
- *The Vale of Wardour, characterised by complex geology, rolling topography and a landscape of irregular assarted fields and open late 18th and early 19th century large arable fields on the Upper Greensand and dip slope terraces."*

Local landscape character areas (refer to figure 1.3)

- 1.15 Within the North Dorset Landscape Character Area Assessment March 2008 there are 17 landscape character areas and the Site lies within character area The Blackmore Vale.
- 1.16 The surrounding study area contains four character areas.

1.17 The baseline study has established that the following landscape character areas and associated landscape resources may be affected by the Proposed Development:

- L1 – The Site;
- L2 – The Blackmore Vale Landscape character area;
- L3 – The North Blackmore Rolling Vales Landscape character area;
- L4 – North Dorset Limestone Ridges Landscape character area and;
- L5 – The Upper Stour Valley Landscape character area.

1.18 The potential effects of the Proposed Development on these character areas will be assessed within data sheets L1 to L5. A description of the relevant baseline landscape character areas is provided in the following paragraphs.

L1: The Site

1.19 The Site is mainly agricultural land bounded to the north by the settlement edge of Gillingham. The settlement edge to the north is recent residential development post-2000 to the west of Shaftsbury Road, with an area of 1971 to 2000 residential to the east of the B3092. A primary school lies on the northern boundary off Kingfisher Avenue. Running along the western boundary of the site is the River Lodden, with its associated floodplain.

1.20 The Site has a gently undulating topography. There is a high point to the west of Shaftsbury Road at approximately 82m AOD and the land gently falls westwards to the River Lodden at approximately 70m AOD.

1.21 There are a number of significant amenity trees throughout the Site, a network of well-maintained hedgerows. Generally the trees are in good condition and are mainly oak and ash with some crack willow, apple, white poplar, hawthorn and wild cherry. Some of the hedgerows throughout the Site are relatively new, whilst others are mature. The hedges have been regularly trimmed by mechanical means and offer wildlife connectivity and add to the character of the area. The hedgerow species consist mainly of blackthorn with some hawthorn, hazel, elder, elm and willow. There are no trees with preservation orders within the Site itself.

1.22 A number of footpaths run through the Site. Footpath N64/35 runs from the western side of St Mary the Virgin Primary School to Cole Street Lane adjacent to New Road. Footpath N64/33 runs from the east of St Mary the Virgin Primary School to Cole Street Lane at Cole Street Farm. Footpath N64/78 is a spur that runs from footpath N64/33 to further east along Cole Street Lane. Footpath N64/34 is a spur that connects footpath N64/33 to The Meadows and Addison Close. There are no Sustrans cycle routes through the Site.

1.23 There are no landscape, cultural heritage or ecological designations within the Site.

L2: The Blackmore Vale Landscape character area

1.24 There are no landscape designations within the Blackmore Vale landscape character area within the 2.5km study area, however, there are some natural

heritage and cultural heritage designations. There are a number of scheduled monuments, listed buildings and conservation areas. The scheduled monument of Kings Court Palace lies on the north eastern boundary of the Site. This is a moated site of a medieval royal hunting lodge situated within Gillingham deer park near the confluence of the River Lodden and Fern Brook. The moat was probably filled with water fed from the River Lodden. The earthworks of the deer park boundary bank remain virtually unbroken to the east of the palace for approximately a third of a mile between Waterloo Farm and Donedge Lodge Farm. There is also a conservation area at Motcombe. There are a couple of ancient woodland areas. These are at King's Court Wood and an area of woodland west of Forest Lodge Farm.

- 1.25 It is predominantly a pastoral and intensively farmed landscape. There are small irregular shaped fields divided with straight, broad and often flat topped trimmed hedgerows. There are mature oak trees regularly spaced out along the hedgerows. There are many small copses and plantations scattered across the Vale. It is an open and expansive landscape with long views particularly to the chalk escarpment. The narrow lanes are twisted and form a contorted network with distinctive 90° bends in places. Shaftesbury Road (B3081) runs north south forming the eastern boundary. New Road forms the western boundary and Cole Street Lane forms the south western boundary. Gillingham dominates a large part of the north eastern area of the Vale with some visually prominent and detracting urban edges. There are a number of public rights of way that run throughout the study area. These connect farmsteads and small settlements to rural roads and connect with the settlement edge of Gillingham. The key characteristics of the Blackmore Vale that are experienced within the 2.5km study area are the following:

- *"A broad expansive clay Vale which is tranquil and unified;*
- *A unique mosaic of woods, straight hedgerows and grassland fields 'dotted' with distinctive mature hedgerow Oaks;*
- *Open views across the undulating to flat pastoral landscape to the chalk escarpment backdrop;*
- *Dense network of twisting lanes often with grass verges and sharp double 90o bends;*
- *Small hump backed bridges with low stone or brick parapets;*
- *Many very small villages and hamlets built with locally distinctive materials, such as stone, redbrick, tile and thatch;*
- *A network of ditches, streams and brooks which drain into the tributaries of the Stour."*

L3: The North Blackmore Rolling Vales Landscape character area

- 1.26 There are no landscape designations within the North Blackmore Rolling Vale landscape character area within the 2.5km study area, however, there are some limited natural heritage and cultural heritage designations. There are a number of scattered listed buildings and an ancient woodland at Dunccliffe Hill that is also a Woodland Trust Site. There are no conservation areas. It is mainly a pastoral landscape with occasional arable fields interspersed among permanent pasture and meadow. There are small irregular shaped fields with thick tall hedgerows, mature hedgerow trees and small copses that together with the narrow, twisting, hedge-banked lanes restrict visibility. Occasional high points such as Dunccliffe

Wood provide open views across the Vale. There are a number of public rights of way that run throughout the study area. These connect farmsteads and small settlements to rural roads. The key characteristics of the North Blackmore Rolling Vale that are experienced within the 2.5km study area are the following:

- *"Undulating, rolling farmland hills forming a transition zone between the Blackmore Vale and the chalk escarpment foothills;*
- *Divides the Blackmore Vale north and south of the area;*
- *Irregular pattern of farmland, fields, copses, streams, dense hedgerows and copses;*
- *Many dispersed and isolated hamlets and farmsteads;*
- *Duncliffe Wood is a key feature and outlier of Upper Greensand with a distinctive wave-shaped profile;*
- *The escarpment to the east forms an important feature and backdrop to the area;*
- *There are some important views over the Vale from high places;*
- *Many small streams and brooks;*
- *The area provides a rural, important setting for Shaftesbury which overlooks the area."*

L4: North Dorset Limestone Ridges Landscape character area

- 1.27 There are no landscape or natural heritage designations within the North Dorset Limestone Ridges landscape character area within the 2.5km study area, however, there are some limited cultural heritage designations. There is a conservation area at Gillingham town centre that extends westwards into the character area and some scattered listed buildings. It is mainly pastoral farmland with some arable and is characterised by relatively thick hedgerows, often trimmed along roadsides and left to grow naturally in other places. There are medium irregular shaped fields with frequent copses and plantations on high points that together with the twisting, hedge lined lanes generally restrict visibility other than from the high points. There are a number of public rights of way that run throughout the study area. The Stour Valley Way runs north to south from Milton on Stour in the north along the River Stour to Bugley. This is a long distance recreation route that is approximately 64 miles long and follows the course of the river Stour from Stourhead to the coast at Christchurch. The footpaths connect smaller villages and rural roads, providing a dense network and providing access to the surrounding fields from the town of Gillingham. The key characteristics of the North Dorset Limestone Ridges that are experienced within the 2.5km study area are the following:

- *"Elevated open plateau areas of undulating farmland landscape with distinctive sloping edges in places;*
- *Thick dense hedgerows and frequent small copses and plantations;*
- *Open views from higher areas across the Vale to the chalk escarpment;*
- *Many scattered villages and farmsteads and a distinctive settlement pattern along the ridges or on the side slopes to the ridges;*
- *The traditional use of locally available and distinctive limestone in the villages and in other buildings and structures;*

- *Numerous twisting hedge lined lanes, straighter ridge top roads and many public Rights of Way."*

L5: The Upper Stour Valley Landscape character area

1.28 There are no landscape or natural heritage designations within the Upper Stour Valley landscape character area within the 2.5km study area, however, there is a single listed building. It is an intimate valley landscape contained by the rising valley sides that have areas of trees and thick hedgerows. It contains small-scale grazed fields along the meandering river channel with groups or ribbons of Alder and Willow and a narrow rural lane follows the valley side into Gillingham. There are three public rights of way that run throughout the study area. The Stour Valley Way runs along the River Stour. This is a long distance recreation route that is approximately 64 miles long and follows the course of the River Stour from Stourhead to the coast at Christchurch. The other couple of footpaths connect rural roads to Gillingham town centre. The key characteristics of the Upper Stour Valley that are experienced within the 2.5km study area are the following:

- *"A varied but generally flat, pastoral river valley landscape as it flows through the Limestone Ridges and Blackmore Vale character areas;*
- *Often a narrow river channel intensively farmed up to its edges with few marginal areas;*
- *Similar characteristics in places as the Blackmore Vale but less trees Important associated groups and ribbons of trees following the course of the river in places to include visually important mature Willows and Alders;*
- *The meandering channel of the river itself is a key feature;*
- *Steeper wooded side slopes in places are key features;*
- *Old derelict mills, mill ponds, areas of reed and marginal vegetation and old bridges crossing the river are all key features;*
- *The riverside meadows at Sturminster Newton are key features of historic and cultural importance;*
- *Small bridges crossing brooks on rural lanes are key features;*
- *Locally distinctive architecture and a few settlements are key features of interest."*

Existing visual baseline

Views of the Site

1.29 There are views from public rights of way within the Site and views from the southern urban edge of Gillingham. There are views from the surrounding roads including the B3081 Shaftesbury Road, B3092 New Road and the A30. Local roads including Cole Street Lane, Standpitts Lane, Bleet Lane and Lintern Lane have potential visibility although the thick hedgerows and mature trees along these winding lanes may reduce visibility, particularly during the summer. There are small patches of potential visibility to the north west and north east of Gillingham around Peacemarsh and Bowridge Hill. The main area of visibility is within the wider landscape to the south, south west and south east of Gillingham, however, there are limited receptors within this area with a few scattered farmsteads and limited public rights of way.

- 1.30 A computer-generated model of the zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) in combination with fieldwork has been used to assess the potential visibility of the proposals within the study area. The ZTV illustrated in figure 1.7 has been used to identify the visual receptors that have the potential to be affected by the proposals. Those visual receptors that may be potentially affected by the development proposals are set out in table 1.1 and numbered from V1 to V7.
- 1.31 A number of representative viewpoints have been selected within the study area to illustrate how the Site is experienced by the identified visual receptors. The viewpoints chosen provide a representative selection of views from locations where the Site is visible and cover a range of receptors from varying directions and distances. The viewpoint locations are illustrated on figure 1.8 and the photographic viewpoints are illustrated on figures 1.9 to 1.15.

Table 1-1: Visual Receptors

Location	Identified viewpoint(s)
Residential	
V1: From residents on the development edge of Gillingham, cul-de-sacs off Kingfisher Avenue The southern edge of Gillingham is more recent development bounded by open countryside to the south. The properties along the southern side of Kingfisher Avenue and the cul-de-sacs that run south from this road may have glimpsed views of the Site from their upper floor windows and potentially their rear gardens. Clear views are available from a farm access track and public right of way at the end of Pheasant Way cul-de-sac.	Viewpoint 1
V2: From residents on the development edge of Gillingham, cul-de-sacs off The meadows The properties along the southern side of The Meadows and the cul-de-sacs that run south from this road may have glimpsed views of the Site from their upper floor windows and potentially their rear gardens.	Viewpoint 2
Transport routes	
V3: B3092 New Road This is a single carriageway national speed limit road running from Gillingham town centre south to join the A30. It has residential and employment alongside the road to the north, on the edge of Gillingham and residential development to either side as it goes through East Stour. Where it goes through development the speed limit drops to 30mph. There are no footpaths alongside the road and it is generally contained by tall hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees.	Viewpoint 3
V4: B3081 Shaftesbury Road This is a busy single carriageway, national speed limit, and main transport route connecting Gillingham to Shaftesbury. There are no footpaths alongside the road and there are occasional grassed verges and hedgerows along both sides with mature roadside trees.	Viewpoint 4
V5: A30 This is a single carriageway national speed limit 'A' road running from London to Land's End. Throughout the 2.5km study area it goes east west from East Stour to Shaftesbury. There are wide grassed verges and occasional stretches of footpath where the road goes through small settlements. There are occasional laybys and the road is generally contained by tall hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees.	Viewpoint 5
V6: Public right of way N62/14 This is a public footpath that is approximately 1km long and connects Madjeston with Hunger Hill on the B3092. At the parish boundary it changes to footpath N64/32. It runs through pastoral and arable farmland of medium scale fields with dense mature hedgerow boundaries and occasional woodland copses.	Viewpoint 6
V7: Public right of way N62/79 This is a public footpath that is approximately 1.5km long and connects Cole Street Lane with Fern Hill on the A30. At the parish boundary it changes to footpath N64/17. It runs through pastoral farmland of medium to small-scale fields and dense mature hedgerow boundaries.	Viewpoint 7

Mitigation within the Submitted Design (Primary mitigation)

- 1.32 The development consists of 961 dwellings, a mixed use area, primary school extension, open space and associated transport infrastructure. The planning supporting statement describes the Proposed Development in full and reference should be made to this document for a clear understanding of the development parameters against which the assessment is made. The following description

covers the specific areas that will affect the landscape and visual resources and the primary mitigation measures.

Primary mitigation

- 1.33 The potential impacts on the landscape and visual resources were a significant consideration from the outset of the development of the parameter plans, which evolved throughout the design process. The need to retain and accommodate key landscape elements, and the likely effect on receptors both within and beyond the development boundaries, influenced and guided the proposals. As a result, the scheme has been developed to best protect the landscape resources of the Site and its landscape setting.
- 1.34 Key primary measures incorporated into the master plan and building heights plan and landscape strategy plan in figures 1.4 to 1.6 aim to minimise the initial predicted impacts of the Proposed Development and include the following:
- Determining the maximum building heights;
 - Avoiding development within the flood zone by creating informal public open space along the river corridors in accordance with policy 21;
 - There are a number of existing woodlands, hedgerows and individual trees within the Site. A tree survey has informed which are to be retained. All important trees, groups of trees and hedgerows have been retained in accordance with policy 21;
 - New cycleway/pedestrian routes have been carefully located to provide a permeable and legible network connecting into existing public rights of way within the surrounding countryside and town centre in accordance with policy 21;
 - Retention of important views from within the Site looking out to the wider countryside;
 - Retention of existing structural landscape planting and the incorporation of informal open space to the south and north of the Site was incorporated into the Proposed Development, creating screening of the Proposed Development from the wider countryside;
 - The Proposed Development will give rise to surface water run-off from roads, buildings, vehicular parking areas, hard standing and landscaped areas. The proposed surface water drainage system will discharge into a system of attenuation basins.

Likely Significant Environmental Effects of the Scheme

Design

Predicted sources of landscape and visual effects

- 1.35 The principal sources of change to landscape resources and visual amenity arise from the introduction of new built forms and landscape elements. The changes that could occur to the landscape can be separated into temporary (that occur during construction) and permanent changes that occur post construction. Some of these changes may be beneficial, resulting in an improvement in quality or

landscape resources, while others may be adverse. Some changes may initially be adverse, but on establishment and maturity may result in a gradual improvement as new landscape resources replace old or supplement the existing. This makes qualitative evaluation more difficult. Experience indicates that the latter is frequently the case, as landscape perception inevitably determines assessment. Sudden change in a known landscape is almost always initially prominent, but its perceived significance soon fades with acceptance. The elements that will give rise to landscape and visual effects are summarised in the following paragraphs.

Construction

Predicted temporary effects during construction

- 1.36 The following activities will cause temporary changes to landscape and visual receptors during all phases of the construction period:
- Infrastructure provision – building access roads / connection to services / trenching operations;
 - The erection of temporary protective and security fencing as well as hoarding to reduce noise impact;
 - Site compounds and contractors' car parking;
 - Site excavation and the movement of soils for the construction of the new vehicular accesses;
 - Site level changes, mainly involving foundations and creation of new road infrastructure;
 - Introduction of cranes, rigs and large machinery and their associated movement and noise, both to and from the Site and around the Site;
 - Temporary lighting and signage associated with construction works;
 - Changes to the surrounding roads due to the movement of additional heavy machinery during construction; and
 - Construction related noise affecting local levels.

Predicted permanent effects at completion (post-construction)

- 1.37 The following activities will cause permanent changes to landscape and visual receptors:
- Loss of some hedgerows, trees and scrub vegetation on the periphery of the Site;
 - Creation of large areas of informal and formal open space and new tree planting;
 - Construction of up to 961 dwellings, along with new infrastructure;
 - Introduction of new planting;
 - Introduction of new junction arrangement and roads;
 - Relocation of the development / urban edge of Gillingham, including lighting;

- Earthworks including floodwater attenuation basins;
- Alteration to access roads, junctions or highways improvements at Shaftesbury Road and New Road;
- Changes in visual appearance of the Site;
- Loss of views; and
- Changes to the character of the Site.

Predicted potential landscape and visual effects

1.38 The following section predicts the potential effects on the landscape resources and visual amenity receptors within the Site and in the areas surrounding the Site identified in the baseline section. In each case, the predicted significance of the effects is described in relation to the completion of the final phase of the Proposed Development (i.e. at completion). The effects in relation to the following conditions are also described:

- Effects during construction;
- Night time effects; and
- Effects after 15 years (examined in paragraph 1.44 and table 1.2).

Predicted effects on landscape character

1.39 The effects on the landscape resources identified in the baseline are set out in the form of data sheets L1-L5 for each identified character area within the ZTV on the following pages.

L1 - Landscape effects on the Site

Sensitivity of the landscape receptor

Value of the landscape receptor

There are no landscape, ecological or cultural heritage designations within the Site boundary. There are a number of significant amenity trees throughout the Site, a network of well-maintained hedgerows and some newly planted wooded areas. Generally the trees are in good condition and are mainly oak and ash with some crack willow, apple, white poplar, hawthorn and wild cherry. Some of the hedgerows throughout the Site are relatively new, whilst others are mature. The hedges have been regularly trimmed by mechanical means and offer wildlife connectivity and add to the character of the area. The hedgerow species consist mainly of blackthorn with some hawthorn, hazel, elder, elm and willow. There are no trees with preservation orders within the Site itself. A number of footpaths run through the Site. There are no Sustrans cycle routes through the Site. The value of the Site's landscape is considered to be medium.

Susceptibility to change:

The landscape within the Site is able to accommodate a small change without undue consequences arising on the condition or quality of its defining characteristics. The susceptibility of the Site to the specific change associated with the Proposed Development is therefore considered to be medium.

Sensitivity of landscape receptor

The landscape receptor is therefore judged to be of **medium** sensitivity.

Landscape effects during construction (construction phase)

Size/scale:

A large degree of activity and disturbance will be evident during construction, with the movement of machinery around the Site, and introduction of construction elements that will alter the key elements of the landscape, cause noise and vibration, and alter some key characteristics. These will be phased and will therefore be limited to smaller areas of the Site at any one time.

Geographical extent:

The construction effects will influence the whole of the Site over a phased period.

Duration:

The landscape effects during construction will be medium term and temporary.

Reversibility:

The landscape effects during construction will be partially reversible.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of landscape effects during construction will be **large adverse** and temporary.

Significance of landscape effects

The degree of effect will therefore be **substantial adverse** and **significant**.

Landscape effects at completion (operational phase)

Size/scale:

The landscape resources of the Site will be altered by the loss of agricultural land and the development and expansion of Gillingham's urban fabric. The built form will consist of new houses, comprising a range of detached, semi-detached houses and flats. These are the following heights two storeys (up to 9m), two and a half (up to 11m) and three storeys (up to 12m) with a small area of 4 storeys (up to 14m). A primary school, allotments, play space, playing pitches, informal open space, attenuation, a local centre with an extra care facility and associated infrastructure will also be constructed. Although this will be in contrast to the existing land use, it is consistent with the adjacent urban development at Gillingham. The majority of hedgerows and mature trees within the Site will be retained and will be incorporated into areas of public open space. New footpaths throughout the Proposed Development will connect to the existing surrounding public rights of way into the wider landscape. Drainage ditches will be retained within the Site in the areas of open space. Where internal roads cross the existing hedgerows, these have been carefully positioned to avoid good quality trees wherever possible, dependent upon the topography.

Geographical extent:

The landscape effects of the proposals will influence the entire Site.

Duration:

The landscape effects at completion will be long term and beyond 25 years.

Reversibility:

The landscape effects at completion will be permanent.

Seasonal variation:

There will be a small seasonal variation in the landscape effects due to existing retained deciduous vegetation.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of landscape effects at completion will be **large adverse** and permanent.

Significance of landscape effects

The degree of effect will therefore be **substantial adverse** and **significant**.

Night time landscape effects at completion

There will be an increase in lighting across the Site.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of night time landscape effects at completion will be **large adverse** and permanent.

Significance of landscape effects

The degree of effect will therefore be **substantial adverse** and **significant**.

L2 - Landscape effects on the Blackmore Vale landscape character area within the study area

Sensitivity of the landscape receptor

Value of the landscape receptor

There are no landscape designations, however, there are a number of cultural heritage designations in the form of a scheduled monument at Kings Court Palace and earthworks of the deer park boundary bank. There are also a number of listed buildings giving the character area high cultural value. It has moderate to low ecological sensitivity with two small areas of ancient woodland but no other ecological designations. The visual sensitivity is mainly low with small areas of moderate sensitivity along the river corridors and a small area of higher visual sensitivity on the higher ground at Bowridge Hill. Tranquility is moderate throughout most of the character area, with areas of very low tranquility around the edges of Gillingham. The value of this landscape receptor is considered to be medium.

Susceptibility to change:

A largely homogeneous rural character where the development edge of Gillingham dominates a large part of the north eastern area. The lower topography combined with the broad and often flat topped trimmed hedgerows, small copses and plantations scattered across the Vale restrict visibility. The susceptibility of the landscape receptor to specific change associated with the Proposed Development is considered to be medium.

Sensitivity of landscape receptor

The landscape receptor is therefore judged to be of **medium sensitivity**.

Landscape effects during construction (construction phase)

Size/scale:

A very minor degree of activity and disturbance will be evident during construction with the movement of machinery around the Site.

Geographical extent:

The construction will be experienced immediately adjacent to the Site within approximately 1km. Beyond this it will be experienced in localised areas of higher land to the east and north.

Duration:

The landscape effects during construction will be medium term and temporary.

Reversibility:

The landscape effects during construction will be partially reversible.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of landscape effects during construction will be **negligible adverse** and temporary.

Significance of landscape effects

The degree of effect will therefore be **negligible adverse** and **not significant**.

Landscape effects at completion (operational phase)

Size/scale:

While the majority of the Site falls within this landscape character area, for the purposes of this assessment the Site itself has been assessed as a separate character area (see L1). The Proposed Development will have no direct effects on the landscape character of this area beyond the Site boundary and highway improvements. None of the key characteristics will be affected by the Proposed Development other than the open views across the undulating to flat pastoral landscape to the chalk escarpment backdrop, however, the views currently include Gillingham and these will only have a minor change with the development edge extending slightly further south. The introduction of residential development into the Site will be characteristic of the local receiving landscape and will have only a very minor negative change to the balance of landscape characteristics within a small area of the Blackmore Vale landscape character area.

Geographical extent:

The development will be experienced immediately adjacent to the Site within approximately 1km. Beyond this it will be experienced in localised areas of higher land to the east and north.

Duration:

The landscape effects at completion will be long term and beyond 25 years.

Reversibility:

The landscape effects at completion will be permanent.

Seasonal variation:

There will be a small seasonal variation in landscape effects due to existing flat topped trimmed hedgerows, small copses and plantations within the wider landscape.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of landscape effects at completion will be **negligible adverse** and permanent.

Significance of landscape effects

The degree of effect will therefore be **negligible adverse** and **not significant**.

Night time landscape effects at completion

There will be an increase in lighting across the Site; however, seen in the context of Gillingham this will be in character with the surrounding area.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of night time landscape effects at completion will be **negligible adverse** and permanent.

Significance of landscape effects

The degree of effect will therefore be **negligible adverse** and **not significant**.

L3 - Landscape effects on the North Blackmore Rolling Vales landscape character area within the study area

Sensitivity of the landscape receptor

Value of the landscape receptor

There are no landscape designations, and other than a few listed buildings there are no cultural heritage assets. The cultural heritage value is therefore low. It has low ecological sensitivity with a small area of high ecological sensitivity at Dunctiffe Hill woodland trust site and ancient woodland. The visual sensitivity is moderate with some important views over the vale from higher land. Tranquility is low probably due to the busy A30. The value of this landscape receptor is considered to be medium.

Susceptibility to change:

The undulating, irregular small-scale pastoral landscape with thick tall hedgerows, mature hedgerow trees and small copses, together with the narrow, twisting, hedge-banked lanes restrict visibility. The susceptibility of the landscape receptor to specific change associated with the Proposed Development is considered to be medium.

Sensitivity of landscape receptor

The landscape receptor is therefore judged to be of **medium sensitivity**.

Landscape effects during construction (construction phase)

Size/scale:

A very minor degree of activity and disturbance will be evident during construction with the movement of machinery around the Site.

Geographical extent:

The construction will be experienced in localised areas throughout the North Blackmore Rolling Vales within the study area. The areas potentially affected are the north-facing slopes to the south of the Site and small isolated areas of higher land to the east.

Duration:

The landscape effects during construction will be medium term and temporary.

Reversibility:

The landscape effects during construction will be partially reversible.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of landscape effects during construction will be **negligible adverse** and **temporary**.

Significance of landscape effects

The degree of effect will therefore be **negligible adverse** and **not significant**.

Landscape effects at completion (operational phase)

Size/scale:

The Proposed Development will have no direct effects on the landscape character of this area. None of the key characteristics will be affected by the Proposed Development other than potentially some important views over the Vale from high places, however, the views currently include Gillingham and these will only have a minor change with the development edge extending slightly further south. The introduction of residential development into the Site will be characteristic of the receiving landscape and will have only a very minor negative change to the balance of landscape characteristics within a small area of the North Blackmore Rolling Vales landscape character area.

Geographical extent:

The effects of the proposals would influence localised areas throughout the North Blackmore Rolling Vales within the study area. The areas potentially affected by the proposals are the north-facing slopes to the south of the Site and small isolated areas of higher land to the east.

Duration:

The landscape effects at completion will be long term and beyond 25 years.

Reversibility:

The landscape effects at completion will be permanent.

Seasonal variation:

During summer the thick tall hedgerows, mature hedgerow trees and small copses, together with the narrow, twisting, hedge-banked lanes will reduce the effects on landscape character.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of landscape effects at completion will be **negligible adverse** and **permanent**.

Significance of landscape effects

The degree of effect will therefore be **negligible adverse** and **not significant**.

Night time landscape effects at completion

There will be an increase in lighting across the Site; however, seen in the context of Gillingham this will be in character with the surrounding area.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of night time landscape effects at completion will be **negligible adverse** and **permanent**.

Significance of landscape effects

The degree of effect will therefore be **negligible adverse** and **not significant**.

L4 - Landscape effects on the North Dorset Limestone Ridges landscape character area within the study area

Sensitivity of the landscape receptor

Value of the landscape receptor

There are no landscape designations, and other than a few listed buildings and the western part of the conservation area of Gillingham there are no cultural heritage assets. The cultural heritage value is therefore low. There are no ecological designations, however, it is considered by North Dorset District Council in the landscape character area assessment to have areas of high ecological sensitivity on the upper slopes and moderate to low ecological sensitivity on the valley sides. The visual sensitivity is high as the elevated position allows views across the vale. Tranquility is moderate to low throughout the part of the character area that lies within the 2.5km study area and very low around Madjeston. The value of this landscape receptor is considered to be medium.

Susceptibility to change:

It is mainly pastoral farmland with some arable and is characterised by relatively thick hedgerows, often trimmed along roadsides and left to grow naturally in other places. The medium irregular shaped fields with frequent copses and plantations on high points together with the twisting, hedge lined lanes generally restrict visibility other than from the high points. The susceptibility of the North Dorset Limestone Ridges to the specific change associated with the Proposed Development is considered to be medium.

Sensitivity of landscape receptor

The landscape receptor is therefore judged to be of **medium sensitivity**.

Landscape effects during construction (construction phase)

Size/scale:

A very minor degree of activity and disturbance will be evident during construction with the movement of machinery around the Site. This will be phased and will therefore be limited to smaller areas of the Site at any one time.

Geographical extent:

The North Dorset Limestone Ridge within the study area is divided into two areas by the upper Stour valley. The effects during construction would influence localised areas of the character area. The area to the east of the valley has a very limited area of potential visibility to the north, around Madjeston. The area of potential visibility within the character area to the west of the valley covers a small area with patches of potential visibility on the east-facing slopes.

Duration:

The landscape effects during construction will be medium term and temporary.

Reversibility:

The landscape effects during construction will be partially reversible.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of landscape effects during construction will be **negligible adverse** and **temporary**.

Significance of landscape effects

The degree of effect will therefore be **negligible adverse** and **not significant**.

Landscape effects at completion (operational phase)

Size/scale:

The Proposed Development will have no direct effects on the landscape character of this area. None of the key characteristics will be affected by the Proposed Development other than potentially some open views from higher areas across the Vale to the chalk escarpment, however, the views currently include Gillingham and these will only have a minor change with the development edge extending slightly further south. The introduction of residential development into the Site will be characteristic of the receiving landscape and will have only a very minor negative change to the balance of landscape characteristics within a small area of the North Dorset Limestone Ridge landscape character area.

Geographical extent:

The North Dorset Limestone Ridge within the study area is divided into two areas by the upper Stour valley. The effects of the proposals would influence localised areas of the character area. The area to the east of the valley has a very limited area of potential visibility to the north, around Madjeston. The area of potential visibility within the character area to the west of the valley covers a small area with patches of potential visibility on the east-facing slopes.

Duration:

The landscape effects at completion will be long term and beyond 25 years.

Reversibility:

The landscape effects at completion will be permanent.

Seasonal variation:

During summer the relatively thick hedgerows, frequent copses and plantations together with tree lined hedges along the lanes will increase the sense of enclosure reducing the effects on landscape character.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of landscape effects at completion will be **negligible adverse** and **permanent**.

Significance of landscape effects

The degree of effect will therefore be **negligible adverse** and **not significant**.

Night time landscape effects at completion

There will be an increase in lighting across the Site; however, seen in the context of Gillingham this will be in character with the surrounding area.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of night time landscape effects at completion will be **negligible adverse** and **permanent**.

Significance of landscape effects

The degree of effect will therefore be **negligible adverse** and **not significant**.

L5 - Landscape effects on the Upper Stour Valley landscape character area within the study area

Sensitivity of the landscape receptor

Value of the landscape receptor

There are no landscape designations or ecological designations and only a single listed building. The cultural heritage value is therefore low. There are no ecological designations and it is considered by North Dorset District Council in the landscape character area assessment to have low ecological sensitivity. The visual sensitivity is considered to be moderate in the North Dorset landscape character assessment. Tranquility is moderate to very low adjacent to Gillingham. There are three public rights of way that run throughout the study area including the Stour Valley Way, a long distance recreation route that runs along the River Stour. The value of this landscape receptor is considered to be medium.

Susceptibility to change:

It is an intimate valley landscape contained by the rising valley sides that have areas of trees and thick hedgerows. It contains small-scale grazed fields along the meandering river channel with groups or ribbons of Alder and Willow and a narrow rural lane follows the valley side into Gillingham. The susceptibility of the landscape receptor to specific change associated with the Proposed Development is considered to be medium.

Sensitivity of landscape receptor

The landscape receptor is therefore judged to be of *medium sensitivity*.

Landscape effects during construction (construction phase)

Size/scale:

The effects of the construction will principally relate to its visibility from this character area and potentially noise. Where glimpses are possible to the north of this character area, the character will not alter, as there would be a negligible alteration of the elements or key features of the landscape. The character area is some distance from the Site and there is a road between the Site and the Upper Stour Valley, therefore the effects of noise will be limited.

Geographical extent:

The effects of the construction would influence a very limited part of the character area immediately adjacent to the Site and close to the development edge of Gillingham.

Duration:

The landscape effects during construction will be medium term and temporary.

Reversibility:

The landscape effects during construction will be partially reversible.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of landscape effects during construction will be *negligible adverse* and *temporary*.

Significance of landscape effects

The degree of effect will therefore be *negligible adverse* and *not significant*.

Landscape effects at completion (operational phase)

Size/scale:

The effects of the Proposed Development will principally relate to its visibility from this character area. Where glimpses are possible to the north of this character area, the character will not alter, as there would be a negligible alteration of the elements or key features of the landscape.

Geographical extent:

The effects of the proposals would influence a very limited part of the character area immediately adjacent to the Site and close to the development edge of Gillingham.

Duration:

The landscape effects at completion will be long term and beyond 25 years.

Reversibility:

The landscape effects at completion will be permanent.

Seasonal variation:

During summer the areas of trees and thick hedgerows and groups or ribbons of Alder and Willow along the river will increase the sense of enclosure reducing the effects on landscape character.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of landscape effects at completion will be *negligible adverse* and *permanent*.

Significance of landscape effects

The degree of effect will therefore be *negligible adverse* and *not significant*.

Night time landscape effects at completion

There will be an increase in lighting across the Site; however, it will be seen in the distance and with lighting associated with Gillingham in the distance.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of night time landscape effects at completion will be *negligible adverse* and *permanent*.

Significance of landscape effects

The degree of effect will therefore be *negligible adverse* and *not significant*.

Predicted effects on visual amenity

- 1.40 The effects on visual amenity to specific receptors are assessed in the following data sheets V1 to V7. To illustrate the visual effects representative viewpoints have been used.

- 1.41 Figure 1.7 shows the ZTV of the proposals. In order to produce the ZTV of the proposals, the building heights parameters plan (figure 1.5) was imported into the digital surface model. Selected points were added with varying height values to accord with the proposed building heights for each block. The height from which the Proposed Development would be visible was set at 1.6m. For full details of the heights and methodology used, refer to appendix part 2.
- 1.42 The ZTV illustrates that the potential visibility of the Proposed Development is largely contained to the area immediately adjacent to the Site and on the north-facing slopes of the North Blackmore Rolling Vales to the south within a 2.5km study area. The urban grain of Gillingham restricts visibility within the settlement, apart from a few areas along the southern edges. Frequent copses and woodlands on high points together with the twisting, hedge lined lanes and field boundaries with tall hedgerows and mature trees generally restrict visibility within the wider landscape. Potential visibility is restricted to a small area to the north west of Gillingham around Peacemarsh and a small area to the north east around Bowridge Hill.

V1 - Visual effects on residents on the development edge of Gillingham, cul-de-sacs off Kingfisher Avenue

Refer to representative viewpoint 1 on figure 1.9.

Sensitivity of the visual receptor	
<p>Value of the visual receptor: This is a recent housing development of two to three storeys on the southern edge of Gillingham. Some of the properties on the edge have views over agricultural fields within the Site and beyond to Duncliffe Hill. The value of the visual receptor is medium.</p> <p>Susceptibility to change: A small number of occupiers of properties on the edge of Gillingham are likely to be affected by the development proposals, as well as people driving, walking or cycling along the cul-de-sacs off Kingfisher Avenue, including people visiting the primary school at the end of Pheasant Way. The susceptibility of the visual receptors to specific change associated with the Proposed Development is high.</p>	
Sensitivity of visual receptor	The visual receptor is therefore judged to be of medium to high sensitivity .
Visual effects during construction (construction phase)	
<p>Size/scale: During construction cranes and construction machinery will be visible above the intervening vegetation. These will occupy a small proportion of the view and will be immediately adjacent to the receptors. There will be a major alteration to the composition of the view.</p> <p>Geographical extent: The visual effects during construction will be immediately adjacent to the receptors and will be over a small proportion of the field of view due to the phased nature of the Proposed Development.</p> <p>Duration: The visual effects during construction will be medium term and temporary.</p> <p>Reversibility: The visual effects during construction will be partially reversible.</p>	
Magnitude of effect	The magnitude of visual effects during construction will be large adverse and temporary .
Significance of visual effects	The degree of effect will therefore be substantial adverse and significant .
Visual effects at completion (operational phase)	
<p>Size/scale: While the existing vegetation within the Site will remain and there will be an area of informal open space immediately adjacent to the rear boundaries of the properties in the cul-de-sacs off Kingfisher Avenue, the residents of the properties along the southern edge of Gillingham will have views of new residential development up to 12m high in the fields to the south. The existing primary school site will be increased in the field immediately adjacent to it and will have a building up to 12m high. There will be a major alteration to the composition of the view.</p> <p>Geographical extent: The visual effects at completion are expected to affect a limited number of visual receptors on the southern settlement edge of Gillingham.</p> <p>Duration: The visual effects at completion will be long term and beyond 25 years.</p> <p>Reversibility: The visual effects at completion will be permanent.</p> <p>Seasonal variation: During the summer the existing deciduous vegetation in the form of hedgerows and occasional hedgerow trees within the rear gardens of the properties, combined with the mature trees and hedgerows within the Site that are being retained, will provide additional screening, filtering views of the Proposed Development.</p>	
Magnitude of effect	The magnitude of visual effects at completion will be large adverse and permanent .
Significance of visual effects	The degree of effect will therefore be substantial adverse and significant .
Night time visual effects at completion	
There will be an increase in lighting associated with the Proposed Development.	
Magnitude of effect	The magnitude of night time visual effects at completion will be large adverse and permanent .
Significance of visual effects	The degree of effect will therefore be substantial adverse and significant .

V2 - Visual effects on residents on the development edge of Gillingham, cul-de-sacs off The Meadows

Refer to representative viewpoint 2 on figure 1.10.

Sensitivity of the visual receptor	
<p>Value of the visual receptor: This is a residential development on the southern edge of Gillingham of mainly two storeys. Some of the properties on the edge have views over agricultural fields within the Site and beyond to Duncliffe Hill. The value of the visual receptor is medium.</p> <p>Susceptibility to change: A small number of occupiers of properties on the edge of Gillingham are likely to be affected by the development proposals, as well as people walking along the edge of the fields on the public right of way. The susceptibility of the visual receptor to specific change associated with the Proposed Development is high.</p>	
Sensitivity of visual receptor	The visual receptor is therefore judged to be of medium to high sensitivity .
Visual effects during construction (construction phase)	
<p>Size/scale: During construction cranes and construction machinery are unlikely to be visible. The fields in the immediate foreground have a housing allocation approval and these are likely to have been built prior to construction activity within the Site beginning. Intervening new residential development will screen construction activity from view. There will be a very minor alteration to the composition of the view.</p> <p>Geographical extent: The visual effects during construction will be beyond the immediate field boundary and this field will contain housing that has been granted planning permission. It will be over a very minor proportion of the field of view.</p> <p>Duration: The visual effects during construction will be medium term and temporary.</p> <p>Reversibility: The visual effects during construction will be partially reversible.</p>	
Magnitude of effect	The magnitude of visual effects during construction will be negligible adverse and temporary .
Significance of visual effects	The degree of effect will therefore be negligible adverse and not significant .
Visual effects at completion (operational phase)	
<p>Size/scale: The fields immediately in the foreground have a housing allocation approval therefore the view will completely change as the development is built. Taking into account the future baseline of a residential development for 90 dwellings on land to the east of Lodden Lakes that will be in the foreground there will be a very minor alteration to the composition of the view.</p> <p>Geographical extent: The visual effects at completion are expected to affect a limited number of visual receptors on the southern settlement edge of Gillingham.</p> <p>Duration: The visual effects at completion will be long term and beyond 25 years.</p> <p>Reversibility: The visual effects at completion will be permanent.</p> <p>Seasonal variation: During the summer the existing deciduous vegetation in the form of hedgerows and occasional hedgerow trees within the rear gardens of the properties, combined with the mature trees and hedgerows within the Site that are being retained, will provide additional screening, filtering views of the Proposed Development.</p>	
Magnitude of effect	The magnitude of visual effects at completion will be negligible adverse and permanent .
Significance of visual effects	The degree of effect will therefore be negligible adverse and not significant .
Night time visual effects at completion	
There will be an increase in lighting associated with the Proposed Development, however, this will be viewed beyond residential development in the foreground that will form the future baseline.	
Magnitude of effect	The magnitude of night time visual effects at completion will be negligible adverse and permanent .
Significance of visual effects	The degree of effect will therefore be negligible adverse and not significant .

V3 - Visual effects on users of the B3092 New Road

Refer to representative viewpoint 3 on figure 1.11.

Sensitivity of the visual receptor	
<p>Value of the visual receptor: This is a single carriageway, national speed limit road running from Gillingham town centre south to join the A30. It has residential and employment alongside the road to the north, on the edge of Gillingham and residential development to either side as it goes through East Stour. Where it goes through development the speed limit drops to 30mph. There are no footpaths alongside the road and it is generally contained by tall hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees. The value of the visual receptor is low.</p> <p>Susceptibility to change: This transport route is used by drivers, and occasional cyclists and pedestrians whose attention is unlikely to be on the surrounding landscape. The susceptibility of the visual receptor to specific change associated with the Proposed Development is low.</p>	
Sensitivity of visual receptor	The visual receptor is therefore judged to be of low sensitivity .
Visual effects during construction (construction phase)	
<p>Size/scale: The receptors using the road will experience disruption as the new junction onto the B3092 is constructed, however, this will be for a fairly short time period. Once these road works are complete the receptors will experience a degree of activity during construction with the introduction of cranes and other types of construction elements within the Site. Users of this transport route will experience glimpsed views of the construction beyond the intervening vegetation.</p> <p>Geographical extent: The visual effects of the construction activity will be immediately adjacent to the Site boundary for approximately 0.5km between the settlement edge of Gillingham and Cole Street Lane. South of Cole Street Lane over approximately 1.3km there will be more glimpsed views of the construction.</p> <p>Duration: The visual effects during construction will be medium term and temporary.</p> <p>Reversibility: The visual effects during construction will be partially reversible.</p>	
Magnitude of effect	The magnitude of visual effects during construction will be medium adverse and temporary .
Significance of visual effects	The degree of effect will therefore be slight adverse and not significant .
Visual effects at completion (operational phase)	
<p>Size/scale: The proposed mixed-use development set within retained mature vegetation and areas of public open space will be clearly visible from the B3092 where it passes the western boundary of the site. A new access junction will be constructed into the Site from this part of the B3092. Residential development will be constructed adjacent to the road up to 11m high. A large area of informal open space will be retained to either side of the River Stour. Further south along the B3092 the Proposed Development will be visible set within a mature landscape and will be viewed in the context of the urban development of Gillingham. Intervening mature hedgerows and small copses filter views of the proposals. There will be a partial alteration to the composition of the view when travelling along the B3092.</p> <p>Geographical extent: The visual effects of the Proposed Development will be experienced when viewed from a moving vehicle or by a pedestrian or cyclist. The main area of visibility of the proposals will be immediately adjacent to the Site boundary for approximately 0.5km between the settlement edge of Gillingham and Cole Street Lane. South of Cole Street Lane over approximately 1.3km there will be more glimpsed views of the proposals from gaps within the existing mature hedgerows. From this part of the B3092 the views will be glimpsed and will be viewed in the context of the existing urban area of Gillingham.</p> <p>Duration: The visual effects at completion will be long term and beyond 25 years.</p> <p>Reversibility: The visual effects at completion will be permanent.</p> <p>Seasonal variation: During the summer the existing deciduous vegetation along the roadside will provide additional screening, filtering views of the Proposed Development, particularly from more distant views of the Site.</p>	
Magnitude of effect	The magnitude of visual effects at completion will be medium adverse and permanent .
Significance of visual effects	The degree of effect will therefore be slight adverse and not significant .
Night time visual effects at completion	
There will be an increase in lighting associated with the Proposed Development, however, this will be viewed in context with the residential development edge of Gillingham.	
Magnitude of effect	The magnitude of night time visual effects at completion will be negligible adverse and permanent .
Significance of visual effects	The degree of effect will therefore be negligible adverse and not significant .

V4 - Visual effects on users of the B3081 Shaftesbury Road

Refer to representative viewpoint 4 on figure 1.12.

Sensitivity of the visual receptor

Value of the visual receptor:

This is a busy single carriageway, national speed limit and the main transport route connecting Gillingham to Shaftesbury. There are no footpaths alongside the road and there are occasional grassed verges and hedgerows along both sides with mature roadside trees. The value of the visual receptor is low.

Susceptibility to change:

This transport route is used by drivers, and occasional cyclists and pedestrians whose attention is unlikely to be on the surrounding landscape. The susceptibility of the visual receptor to specific change associated with the Proposed Development is low.

Sensitivity of visual receptor

The visual receptor is therefore judged to be of **low** sensitivity.

Visual effects during construction (construction phase)

Size/scale:

The receptors using the road will experience disruption as the new junction onto the Shaftesbury Road is constructed, however, this will be for a fairly short time period. Once these road works are complete the receptors will experience a degree of activity during construction with the introduction of cranes and other types of construction elements within the Site. Users of this transport route will experience glimpsed views of the construction beyond the intervening vegetation.

Geographical extent:

The visual effects during construction will be experienced when viewed from a moving vehicle. There will be glimpsed views from the B3081 close to the Site for approximately 1.1km where there is limited vegetation cover. Views will then be completely screened between Waterloo Farm and Fernbrook Farm. At this point the rising land allows glimpsed views of the Site from the road while travelling towards Gillingham. Views of construction activity will be glimpsed for approximately 0.6km between Whitehouse Farm and Fernbrook Farm.

Duration:

The visual effects during construction will be medium term and temporary.

Reversibility:

The visual effects during construction will be partially reversible.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of visual effects during construction will be **medium adverse** and temporary.

Significance of visual effects

The degree of effect will therefore be **slight adverse** and not **significant**.

Visual effects at completion (operational phase)

Size/scale:

Once the Proposed Development is completed the retained vegetation within the Site and areas of public open space will break up the development edge. It will be set down within the landscape beyond intervening mature vegetation and will be viewed in the context of the urban development of Gillingham. There will be a very minor alteration to the composition of the view.

Geographical extent:

The visual effects of the Proposed Development will be experienced when viewed from a moving vehicle or from a pedestrian or cyclist. There may be glimpsed views when travelling north towards Gillingham, however, the Proposed Development will be viewed in the context of the existing urban area of Gillingham. The main area of visibility will be adjacent to the Site boundary for approximately 1.1km between Gillingham and Waterloo Farm. There will also be glimpsed views for approximately 0.6km between Whitehouse Farm and Fernbrook Farm.

Duration:

The visual effects at completion will be long term and beyond 25 years.

Reversibility:

The visual effects at completion will be permanent.

Seasonal variation:

During the summer the existing deciduous vegetation along the roadside will provide additional screening, filtering views of the Proposed Development.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of visual effects at completion will be **negligible adverse** and permanent.

Significance of visual effects

The degree of effect will therefore be **negligible adverse** and not **significant**.

Night time visual effects at completion

There will be an increase in lighting associated with the Proposed Development, however, this will be viewed in context with the residential development edge of Gillingham and the Kingsmead Business Park.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of night time visual effects at completion will be **negligible adverse** and permanent.

Significance of visual effects

The degree of effect will therefore be **negligible adverse** and not **significant**.

V5 - Visual effects on users of the A30

Refer to representative viewpoint 5 on figure 1.13.

Sensitivity of the visual receptor	
<p>Value of the visual receptor: This is a single carriageway national speed limit 'A' road running from London to Land's End. Throughout the 2.5km study area it goes east west from East Stour to Shaftesbury. There are wide grassed verges and occasional stretches of footpath where the road goes through small settlements. There are occasional laybys and the road is generally contained by tall hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees. The value of the visual receptor is low.</p> <p>Susceptibility to change: This transport route is used by drivers, and occasional cyclists and pedestrians whose attention is unlikely to be on the surrounding landscape. The susceptibility of the visual receptor to specific change associated with the Proposed Development is low.</p>	
Sensitivity of visual receptor	The visual receptor is therefore judged to be of low sensitivity .
Visual effects during construction (construction phase)	
<p>Size/scale: The receptors using the road will experience glimpsed views of construction activity in the distance beyond intervening vegetation. The introduction of cranes and other types of construction elements within the Site will be viewed with a backdrop of the urban area of Gillingham. Users of this transport route will experience glimpsed views of the construction beyond the intervening vegetation.</p> <p>Geographical extent: The visual effects of the construction activity will only be visible over a small stretch of the A30 from gaps within the existing mature hedgerow between East Stour Common and Lox Lane. This is at a distance of approximately 1.7km over approximately 1.6km in length.</p> <p>Duration: The visual effects during construction will be medium term and temporary.</p> <p>Reversibility: The visual effects during construction will be partially reversible.</p>	
Magnitude of effect	The magnitude of visual effects during construction will be negligible adverse and temporary .
Significance of visual effects	The degree of effect will therefore be negligible adverse and not significant .
Visual effects at completion (operational phase)	
<p>Size/scale: The proposed mixed-use development set within retained mature vegetation and areas of public open space will be barely perceptible from the A30. The Proposed Development will be set within a mature landscape and will be viewed in the context of the urban development of Gillingham. Intervening mature hedgerows and small copses filter views of the proposals. There will be a very minor alteration to the composition of the view.</p> <p>Geographical extent: The visual effects of the Proposed Development will be experienced when viewed obliquely from a moving vehicle or a pedestrian or cyclist. The views will be glimpsed and will be viewed in the context of the existing urban area of Gillingham. The potential area of visibility of the proposals will be over a small stretch of the A30 from gaps within the existing mature hedgerow between East Stour Common and Lox Lane. This is at a distance of approximately 1.7km over approximately 1.6km in length.</p> <p>Duration: The visual effects at completion will be long term and beyond 25 years.</p> <p>Reversibility: The visual effects at completion will be permanent.</p> <p>Seasonal variation: During the summer the existing deciduous vegetation along the roadside will provide additional screening, filtering views of the Proposed Development.</p>	
Magnitude of effect	The magnitude of visual effects at completion will be negligible adverse and permanent .
Significance of visual effects	The degree of effect will therefore be negligible adverse and not significant .
Night time visual effects at completion	
There will be an increase in lighting associated with the Proposed Development, however, this will be viewed in context with the residential development edge of Gillingham and the Kingsmead Business Park.	
Magnitude of effect	The magnitude of night time visual effects at completion will be negligible adverse and permanent .
Significance of visual effects	The degree of effect will therefore be negligible adverse and not significant.

V6 - Visual effects on users of public right of way N62/14

Refer to representative viewpoint 6 on figure 1.14.

Sensitivity of the visual receptor

Value of the visual receptor:

This is a public footpath that is approximately 1km long and connects Madjeston with Hunger Hill on the B3092. It runs through pastoral and arable farmland of medium scale fields with dense mature hedgerow boundaries and occasional woodland copses. The value of the visual receptor is medium.

Susceptibility to change:

This public right of way is mainly used by local residents and dog walkers whose primary focus is on the landscape. The susceptibility of the visual receptor to specific change associated with the Proposed Development is medium.

Sensitivity of visual receptor

The visual receptor is therefore judged to be of **medium** sensitivity.

Visual effects during construction (construction phase)

Size/scale:

The receptors view will experience a small degree of activity during construction with the introduction of cranes and other types of construction elements, and this will be phased therefore will only occupy a small proportion of the view. Users of this right of way will experience filtered views of the construction effects beyond intervening vegetation on the lower slopes with only a small area on the upper slopes that may have clear views of the construction activity.

Geographical extent:

The visual effects of the construction activity will potentially be experienced along the majority of the length of the footpath.

Duration:

The visual effects during construction will be medium term and temporary.

Reversibility:

The visual effects during construction will be partially reversible.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of visual effects during construction will be **small adverse** and temporary.

Significance of visual effects

The degree of effect will therefore be **slight adverse** and not **significant**.

Visual effects at completion (operational phase)

Size/scale:

From the lower slopes of the footpath there are likely to be glimpsed views of the proposed mixed-use development through intervening vegetation. From the upper slopes to the south of the footpath there is a more open view. The introduction of new housing up to 14m high within the view will cause a minor alteration to the composition and nature of the views experienced within a small proportion of the wider field of views afforded along the footpath. The Proposed Development, where visible, will not be uncharacteristic and will be seen in the context of the development on the edge of Gillingham. It will be set within the landscape with intervening vegetation in the foreground and will not extend any further south than Newhouse Farm visible in the representative photograph.

Geographical extent:

The visual effects of the Proposed Development will potentially be experienced along the majority of the length of the footpath.

Duration:

The visual effects at completion will be long term and beyond 25 years.

Reversibility:

The visual effects at completion will be permanent.

Seasonal variation:

During the summer the existing deciduous vegetation within the Site and within the wider countryside will provide additional screening, filtering views of the Proposed Development.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of visual effects at completion will be **small adverse** and permanent.

Significance of visual effects

The degree of effect will therefore be **slight adverse** and not **significant**.

Night time visual effects at completion

There will be an increase in lighting associated with the Proposed Development, however, this will be viewed in context with the residential development edge of Gillingham.

Magnitude of effect

The magnitude of night time visual effects at completion will be **negligible adverse** and permanent.

Significance of visual effects

The degree of effect will therefore be **negligible adverse** and not **significant**.

V7 - Visual effects on users of public right of way N62/79

Refer to representative viewpoint 7 on figure 1.15.

Sensitivity of the visual receptor	
Value of the visual receptor: This is a public footpath that is approximately 1.5km long and connects Cole Street Lane with Fern Hill on the A30. It runs through pastoral farmland of medium to small-scale fields and dense mature hedgerow boundaries. The value of the visual receptor is medium.	
Susceptibility to change: This public right of way is mainly used by local residents and dog walkers whose primary focus is on the landscape. The susceptibility of the visual receptor to specific change associated with the Proposed Development is medium.	
Sensitivity of visual receptor	The visual receptor is therefore judged to be of medium sensitivity .
Visual effects during construction (construction phase)	
Size/scale: The receptors view will experience a very small degree of activity during construction with the introduction of cranes and other types of construction elements and this will be phased so will only occupy a small proportion of the view. Users of this right of way will experience filtered views of the construction effects beyond intervening vegetation of the dense hedgerow field boundaries.	
Geographical extent: The visual effects of the construction activity will potentially be experienced along the majority of the length of the footpath.	
Duration: The visual effects during construction will be medium term and temporary.	
Reversibility: The visual effects during construction will be partially reversible.	
Magnitude of effect	The magnitude of visual effects during construction will be small adverse and temporary .
Significance of visual effects	The degree of effect will therefore be slight adverse and not significant .
Visual effects at completion (operational phase)	
Size/scale: From the footpath there are likely to be glimpsed views of the proposed mixed-use development through intervening vegetation. The introduction of new housing up to 14m high within the view will cause a minor alteration to the composition and nature of the views experienced within a small proportion of the wider field of views afforded along the footpath. The Proposed Development, where visible, will not be uncharacteristic and will be seen in the context of the development on the edge of Gillingham. It will be set within the landscape with intervening vegetation in the foreground and will not extend any further south than Bramblestones and Meadow Brook visible in the representative photograph.	
Geographical extent: The visual effects of the Proposed Development will potentially be experienced along the majority of the length of the footpath.	
Duration: The visual effects at completion will be long term and beyond 25 years.	
Reversibility: The visual effects at completion will be permanent.	
Seasonal variation: During the summer the existing deciduous vegetation within the Site and the dense mature hedgerows within the wider countryside will provide additional screening, filtering views of the Proposed Development.	
Magnitude of effect	The magnitude of visual effects at completion will be small adverse and permanent .
Significance of visual effects	The degree of effect will therefore be slight adverse and not significant .
Night time visual effects at completion	
There will be an increase in lighting associated with the Proposed Development, however, this will be viewed in context with the residential development edge of Gillingham.	
Magnitude of effect	The magnitude of night time visual effects at completion will be negligible adverse and permanent .
Significance of visual effects	The degree of effect will therefore be negligible adverse and not significant .

Summary of landscape and visual impacts

- 1.43 Table 1.2 indicates the predicted significant potential landscape and visual effects taking into account the primary mitigation, as identified on the building heights plan (figure 1.5) and landscape strategy plan (figure 1.6). As described in paragraphs 1.33 and 1.34, sympathetic siting, arrangement and treatment of the development have been fundamental to the iterative design process.

- 1.44 The preceding data sheets describe the nature of effects following completion of the final construction phase and therefore represent the visual and landscape change anticipated at year 0. An assessment of the operational effects 15 years after completion has also been undertaken to better understand how the primary mitigation measures outlined in paragraph 1.34 reduce adverse effects over time. In this sense, they represent the permanent visual and landscape change, taking account of planting establishment and growth, future management and other anticipated environmental change. All the effects in table 1.2 are adverse in nature and of reasonable certainty.

Assessment Summary and Likely Significant Residual Environmental Effects

Table 1-2: Significant landscape and visual effects

Landscape and visual receptors	Receptor sensitivity	Impact magnitude	Degree of effects during construction	Degree of effects post-construction (year 0)	Degree of effects post-construction (year 15)	Level of certainty
Landscape and visual effects						
Site landscape	Medium	Large	Substantial	Substantial	Moderate	Reasonable
Residents on the development edge of Gillingham, cul-de-sacs off Kingfisher Avenue	Medium to High	Large during construction Large at completion	Substantial	Substantial	Moderate	Reasonable

- 1.45 There is limited visibility of the proposed development throughout the wider landscape created by the topography, existing urban development, abundant hedgerows, hedgerow trees, copses, plantations and woodlands. Only the site character is significantly affected post construction and will have a substantial adverse landscape effect. After 15 years, with the growth of the primary mitigation indicated on the landscape strategy plan (figure 1.6) the landscape effects are expected to reduce to moderate. The surrounding landscape character areas have no significant landscape effects. All of the visual receptors are within approximately 2.5km of the site boundary. Most of the visual receptors will experience limited visual effects that are not significant. Only the residential visual receptors on the southern development edge of Gillingham are expected to experience significant adverse visual effects during construction and at completion. After 15 years, with the growth of the primary mitigation indicated on the parameter plans taken into account, the degree of visual effects on these receptors will be reduced to moderate.

Potential Additional Mitigation, Compensation and Enhancement Measures (Secondary mitigation)

- 1.46 At all stages of the iterative design development, the objective was to avoid or reduce potential adverse effects, through primary mitigation. These primary mitigation measures were incorporated in the parameter plans (see figure 1.4 to 1.6) that formed the basis of the above assessment of effects.
- 1.47 There is the potential for secondary mitigation measures to reduce the remaining potential impacts to come forward during detailed design at the reserved matters application stage. Types of secondary mitigation that are likely to form typical reserved matters conditions are set out below.

Minimise scale of buildings and articulation of built form in response to the surrounding area

- 1.48 Maximum building heights have been used within the parameter plans. There is the potential that during detail design these heights may reduce. The articulation of built form could further respect and respond to the townscape and wider landscape setting.

Architectural design

- 1.49 The design and style of the built form should make a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness of Gillingham and provide high quality design, which will enrich the local environment and create a sense of place (refer to local planning policy 24).

Boundary treatments, street furniture and hard landscape

- 1.50 Streetscapes and the public realm should enhance local distinctiveness and reinforce a sense of place. Proposals should include high quality design, which creates an attractive public realm (refer to local planning policy 24).

Control the use of materials to reduce visibility

- 1.51 Controlled use of colour and materials is recommended to minimise unnecessary or unintentional visual impacts in the wider landscape (refer to local planning policy 24).

Soft landscape

- 1.52 Opportunities for further enhancement include tree planting within open spaces and along principal routes throughout the Proposed Development. This should have the effect of integrating the development into the wider landscape (refer to local planning policy 15, 21 and 24).

Minimise night time impacts by careful design and location of lighting

- 1.53 Any adverse impacts of lighting can be avoided by detailed development control. Careful consideration will be given to the height and type of street, amenity and building lighting to reduce night time effects. Planting should be used to help filter the lighting, reducing its visual impact in the wider landscape.
- 1.54 In re-evaluating the landscape and visual effects after applying the secondary mitigation measures, the magnitude of change to the landscape character of the site could be reduced to moderate. The mixed-use residential development allows for a large proportion of landscape that could significantly reduce the landscape effects, creating a strong interconnected landscape structure with enhanced biodiversity. While this still remains a significant landscape effect at completion, over time the landscape effects could reduce as the planting grows and biodiversity increases.
- 1.55 The introduction of a strong landscape structure throughout the site with tree, hedgerow and shrub planting, not only along the green corridors, but also within the development parcels and along the main infrastructure routes, could reduce the visual effects from the existing southern development edge of Gillingham to

medium at completion. The significance of visual effect could therefore reduce to moderate, however, these are still significant at completion. After 15 years the visual effects could be reduced to small, which would therefore be slight and not significant.

- 1.56 Residual effects are those that are predicted to remain after implementation of the secondary mitigation measures described in paragraphs 1.48 to 1.53. It is important to demonstrate that any measures included as part of the mitigation package to respond to adverse landscape and visual effects can be delivered in practice. At this outline stage, and without detailed design, it is not possible to be certain of their implementation; however, the measures discussed above broadly correspond with adopted planning policy and therefore there is a reasonable likelihood of this being implemented. Table 1.3 shows the significant residual effects predicted to remain after the application of the secondary mitigation measures. All the effects in table 1.3 are adverse in nature and of reasonable certainty.

Table 1-3: Assessment Summary and Residual Effects

Summary description of the identified impact	Sensitivity of Receptor	Impact Magnitude	Significance and Nature of Effect	Additional Mitigation	Residual Impact Magnitude	Residual Significance and Nature of Effect	Confidence Level
Construction							
Change to the Site's landscape character	Medium	Large	Substantial adverse	As described in paragraphs 1.48 to 1.53	Large	Substantial adverse	Reasonable
Residents on the development edge of Gillingham, cul-de-sacs off Kingfisher Avenue	Medium to high	Large	Substantial adverse	As described in paragraphs 1.48 to 1.53	Large	Substantial adverse	Reasonable
Operation							
Change to the Site's landscape character	Medium	Large	Substantial adverse	As described in paragraphs 1.48 to 1.53	Medium	Moderate adverse	Reasonable
Residents on the development edge of Gillingham, cul-de-sacs off Kingfisher Avenue	Medium to high	Large	Substantial adverse	As described in paragraphs 1.48 to 1.53	Medium	Moderate adverse	Reasonable

References

- Natural England, October 2014, An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment
- Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013, Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment (3rd edition)
- Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), March 2012, The National Planning Policy Framework
- Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- North Dorset District Council January 2016 North Dorset Local Plan Part 1
- North Dorset District Council adopted January 2003 North Dorset District Wide Local Plan 1st edition (saved policies)
- National Character Area Profile 133 Blackmore Vale and Vale of Wardour from Natural England website www.naturalengland.org.uk (accessed May 2017)
- North Dorset District Council March 2008 Landscape character area assessment Local Development Framework evidence base
- North Dorset District Council July 2008 Landscape character area assessment Local Development Framework evidence base addendum
- North Dorset District Council June 2012 Gillingham Town Design Statement.

Glossary

Term	Definition
DSM	Digital Surface Model
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPPG	National Planning Practice Guidance
ZTV	Zone of Theoretical Visibility

Appendix A part 1: Planning policy

National planning policy

- A1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published by the Department for Communities and Local Government, came into effect on 27 March 2012. It sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF provides a framework within which councils can produce their own local and neighbourhood plans. The relevant guidance on landscape and visual issues is stated below:

Core planning principles

- A1.2 The NPPF sets out a range of core planning principles that should underpin decision-making (paragraph 17), some of which are of particular relevance to this application.

- *"Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;*
- *Take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;*
- *Contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in this framework;*
- *Promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban areas, recognising that some open land can perform many functions (such as wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, carbon storage, or food production);*
- *Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations"*

Requiring good design

- A1.3 The NPPF in paragraph 56 confirms:

"The government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people."

- A1.4 The NPPF in paragraph 57 states:

"It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes."

- A1.5 Paragraph 61 states:

"Although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond

aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.”

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

A1.6 Paragraph 109 establishes that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- *“Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;*
- *Recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services;*
- *Minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity*
- *Where possible, contributing to the Government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*
- *Preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability; and*
- *Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.”*

A1.7 Paragraph 113 states that:

“Local planning authorities should set criteria based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting protected wildlife or geodiversity sites or landscape areas will be judged. Distinctions should be made between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites, so that protection is commensurate and the contribution that they make to wider ecological networks.”

Conserving and enhancing the historical environment

A1.8 Paragraph 128 states that:

“In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting”

A1.9 Paragraph 131 states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- *“The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”*

A1.10 Paragraph 132 states that:

“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be”

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

- A1.11 The National Planning Practice Guidance contains government guidance, the following of which is relevant to this assessment.
- A1.12 Landscape character (paragraph 001 Ref ID: 8-001-20140306 revised 06.03.2014) states that:

“One of the core principles in the National Planning Policy Framework is that planning should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Local plans should include strategic policies for the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including landscape. This includes designated landscapes but also the wider countryside.

Where appropriate, landscape character assessments should be prepared to complement Natural England's National Character Area profiles. Landscape Character Assessment is a tool to help understand the character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and identify the features that give it a sense of place. It can help to inform, plan and manage change and may be undertaken at a scale appropriate to local and neighbourhood plan-making. Natural England provides guidance on undertaking these assessments.”

- A1.13 Promoting landscape character (paragraph 007 Ref ID: 26-007-20140306 revised 06.03.2014) states that:

“Development should seek to promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, local man-made and natural heritage and culture, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.

The successful integration of all forms of new development with their surrounding context is an important design objective, irrespective of whether a site lies on the urban fringe or at the heart of a town centre.

When thinking about new development the site's land form should be taken into account. Natural features and local heritage resources can help give shape to a development and integrate it into the wider area, reinforce and sustain local distinctiveness, reduce its impact on nature and contribute to a sense of place. Views into and out of larger sites should also be carefully considered from the start of the design process.

Local building forms and details contribute to the distinctive qualities of a place. These can be successfully interpreted in new development without necessarily restricting the scope of the designer. Standard solutions rarely create a distinctive identity or make best use of a particular site. The use of local materials, building methods and details can be an important factor in enhancing local distinctiveness when used in evolutionary local design, and can also be used in more contemporary design. However, innovative design should not be discouraged.

The opportunity for high quality hard and soft landscape design that helps to successfully integrate development into the wider environment should be

carefully considered from the outset, to ensure it complements the architecture of the proposals and improves the overall quality of townscape or landscape. Good landscape design can help the natural surveillance of an area, creatively help differentiate public and private space and, where appropriate, enhance security.”

- A1.14 Promoting a network of greenspaces (paragraph 009 Ref ID: 26-009-20140306 revised 06.03.2014) states that:

“Development should promote public spaces and routes that are attractive, accessible, safe, uncluttered and work effectively for all users – including families, disabled people and elderly people. A system of open and green spaces that respect natural features and are easily accessible can be a valuable local resource and helps create successful places. A high quality landscape, including trees and semi-natural habitats where appropriate, makes an important contribution to the quality of an area.

Public spaces should be designed with a purpose in mind, and wherever possible deliver a range of social and environmental goals. They can take many different forms (for example path, street, square, park, plaza, green), and can serve different functions (for example informal, civic, recreational, commercial). Space left over after development, without a function, is a wasted resource, can detract from a place’s sense of identity and can increase the likelihood of crime and anti-social behaviour occurring (a function could include informal spaces and design elements that add character, and should not be limited only formal functional uses). The benefit of greenspaces will be enhanced if they are integrated into a wider green network of walkways, cycleways, open spaces and natural and river corridors.”

- A1.15 The North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 was adopted in January 2016. The strategic planning policies contained within the Local Plan Part 1 that are relevant to the landscape and visual assessment are as follows:

Policy 2 – Core Spatial Strategy states that:

“All development proposals should be located in accordance with the spatial strategy for North Dorset.

The Four Main Towns

Blandford (Forum and St. Mary), Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton are identified as the main towns in North Dorset. They will function as the main service centres in the District and will be the main focus for growth, both for the vast majority of housing and other development.

Policies 16 to 19 set out the main locations for growth at the four main towns, which will be shown in more detail in Part 2 of the Local Plan that deals with site allocations, with the exception of the southern extension to Gillingham, which is identified as a strategic site allocation in Policy 21 of this document.

Stalbridge and the Larger Villages

Stalbridge and eighteen larger villages have been identified as the focus for growth to meet the local needs outside of the four main towns.

These larger villages are: Bourton, Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, East Stour, Fontmell Magna, Hazelbury Bryan, Iwerne Minster, Marnhull, Milborne St Andrew, Milton Abbas, Motcombe, Okeford Fitzpaine, Pimperne, Shillingstone, Stourpaine, Winterborne Kingston, Winterborne Stickland and Winterborne Whitechurch.

The Countryside

Outside the defined boundaries of the four main towns, Stalbridge and the larger villages, the remainder of the District will be subject to countryside policies where development will be strictly controlled unless it is required to enable essential rural needs to be met.

At Stalbridge and all the District's villages, the focus will be on meeting local (rather than strategic) needs.

Settlement Boundaries

The settlement boundaries defined around the four main towns, Stalbridge and the larger villages in the North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan 2003 and proposals maps are retained and, in conjunction with Policies 16, 17, 18, 19 and 21 of this document, which identify the broad locations for housing and employment growth and regeneration, will continue to be used for development management purposes until reviewed either: through site allocations in Part 2 of the Local Plan or a neighbourhood plan. The settlement boundaries defined around all other settlements in the North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan 2003 and proposals maps are removed and these settlements will be subject to countryside policies unless new settlement boundaries are defined in neighbourhood plans or in Part 2 of the Local Plan."

Policy 4 – The Natural Environment states that:

"The natural environment of North Dorset and the ecosystem services it supports will be enhanced through the protection of environmental assets and the establishment of a coherent ecological network of designated sites and stepping stone sites linked via corridor features. Where development takes place, buffers should be provided to environmental assets to improve their biodiversity value and facilitate adaptation to climate change. Where opportunities exist, new habitats should be created to enhance this network further.

Developments that offer gains in biodiversity whether through the restoration of habitats or the creation of linkages between existing sites, will be looked upon favourably in the decision-making process.

Developments are expected to respect the natural environment including the designated sites, valued landscapes and other features that make it special. Developments should be shaped by the natural environment so that the benefits it provides are enhanced and not degraded.

Development proposals which seek to conserve or enhance the natural environment should be permitted unless significant adverse social or environmental impacts are likely to arise as a result of the proposal.

Landscape Character

The landscape character of the District will be protected through retention of the features that characterise the area. Where significant impact is likely to arise as a

result of a development proposal, developers will be required to clearly demonstrate that the impact on the landscape has been mitigated and that important landscape features have been incorporated in to the development scheme.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Within the areas designated as AONB and their setting, development will be managed in a way that conserves and enhances the natural beauty of the area. Proposals which would harm the natural beauty of the AONBs will not be permitted unless it is clearly in the public interest to do so. In such instances, effective mitigation should form an integral part of the development proposals. Developers will be expected to demonstrate how they have had regard to the objectives of the relevant AONB management plan for the area."

Internationally Important Wildlife Sites

Developers should demonstrate that their proposals will not have significant adverse effects, including cumulative effects, on internationally important wildlife sites. Where this cannot be demonstrated, appropriate mitigation measures will be required otherwise permission will be refused. Mitigation measures for specific sites will include:

- a in relation to Fontmell and Melbury Downs SAC, contributions towards the effective management of the site to reduce recreational pressure;
- b in relation to Rooksmoor SAC, contributions towards the establishment of the North Dorset Trailway between Sturminster Newton and Stalbridge to reduce traffic pollution on the site;
- c in relation to the Dorset Heaths SAC, Dorset Heaths (Purbeck and Wareham) and Studland Dunes SAC, Dorset Heathlands SPA, and Dorset Heathlands Ramsar site, contributions from developments within 5km of the heathland designations towards the sustainable management of the heathland sites or contributions towards the provision of alternative accessible recreation space to reduce recreational pressure on the Dorset heathlands;
- d in relation to the Poole Harbour SPA and Poole Harbour Ramsar site, developments within the harbour catchment will be required to be nitrogen neutral to avoid increasing nitrogen inputs into Poole harbour. A package of measures including upgrade of sewage treatment works or through the transfer of land from intensive agricultural use to less intensive grassland or woodland uses is available.

Sites of Special Scientific Interests (SSSIs)

Nationally designated wildlife sites should not be harmed by development unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the benefits of development clearly outweigh the impact on the site and the wider SSSI site network.

Developers should demonstrate that their proposals will not have a negative impact, including cumulative impacts, on nationally designated wildlife sites. Where the potential for harm is identified, effective mitigation measures will need to be put into place. Developments should seek to link sites together to contribute towards the establishment of a coherent ecological network.

Locally Designated Natural Environment Sites

Locally designated sites represent some of the most valuable local environmental sites. Development should have regard to the reasons for the designation and not harm the integrity of these sites nor connections between them and other environmental assets.

Development proposals should aim to avoid impact on local biodiversity sites however where impact is unavoidable; developers will be required to provide effective mitigation for this loss in biodiversity. As a last resort, compensation measures may be acceptable if effective mitigation cannot be provided. Such compensation measures must offer gains equivalent in magnitude to the loss resulting from the development.

Agricultural Land

The best and most versatile agricultural land will be safeguarded from permanent loss unless it can be demonstrated that there are no suitable alternative sites, or that the proposal has significant economic or social benefits that outweigh the loss of the land from agricultural uses, or that the proposal would support an existing agricultural business.

Species

Where there is likely to be an impact on nationally protected or locally rare or scarce species, an assessment of the impact on these species should be submitted to accompany development proposals. This should be appropriate to the scale of development and be informed initially through consultation with the local environmental records centre."

Policy 5 – The Historic Environment states that:

"Assessing Proposals That Would Harm a Heritage Asset

Any development proposal affecting a heritage asset (including its setting) will be assessed having regard to the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of that asset and securing a viable use for it that is most consistent with its conservation.

For any designated heritage asset, great weight will be given to its conservation when considering any proposal that would have an impact on its significance. Clear and convincing justification for any development that would cause harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset will be required however slight and whether through direct physical impact or by change to its setting.

Justifying Substantial Harm to or the Loss of a Designated Heritage Asset

Development that results in substantial harm to or the loss of a designated heritage asset will be refused unless it can clearly be justified that there is substantial public benefit resulting from the development, outweighing the harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

a the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and

- b no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- c conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is not possible; and
- d the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

In all cases substantial harm (whether through direct physical impact or by change to its setting) to, or the total loss of, a grade II listed building or a registered park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm (whether through direct physical impact or by change to its setting) to, or total loss of, grade I or II* listed buildings and registered parks and gardens, scheduled monuments and undesignated archaeological sites of equivalent importance to scheduled monuments should be wholly exceptional.

Justifying Less Than Substantial Harm to a Designated Heritage Asset

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

Justifying Harm to a Non-Designated Heritage Asset

Where a development proposal will lead to harm to the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, regard will be had to:

- e the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of the asset; and
- f the scale of any harm or loss; and
- g the significance of the heritage asset.

Hidden and Unidentified Heritage Assets

Remains or hidden features or fabric, which contribute to the significance of a designated heritage asset (or which suggest that a non-designated heritage asset is of demonstrably equivalent significance), should be recorded and preserved in situ. The recording and excavation of remains or hidden features or fabric of less heritage value may be permitted, if recording and preservation in situ is not a reasonable or feasible option.

Enabling Development

In exceptional circumstances, a proposal for enabling development that would not otherwise be permitted may be supported if it can be demonstrated that this will secure the long term preservation and enhancement of a designated heritage asset considered to be at risk, or other heritage asset on a local risk register maintained by the Council. Such development will only be permitted if:

- h it has been demonstrated that reasonable consideration has been given to other options for securing the long-term preservation and enhancement that are more consistent with the policies of the Local Plan and these are not available; and

- i it has been demonstrated that the enabling development is the minimum necessary to secure such long term preservation and enhancement; and*
- j the benefits of the enabling development outweigh the dis-benefits of departing from other relevant policies in the Local Plan.*

Enabling development will not be permitted where the Council considers the current condition of the heritage asset is the result of deliberate or reckless neglect or actions designed to secure a benefit from this exception to policy."

Policy 15 – Green Infrastructure states that:

"The Council will seek to:

- a integrate the new green infrastructure to be provided in association with strategic growth at the four main towns with existing green infrastructure networks; and*
- b enhance the provision of green infrastructure in the countryside (including at Stalbridge and the District's villages), especially where it helps to improve recreational opportunities; and*
- c protect and enhance existing open space of importance, character areas, outdoor sport and recreational facilities and provide new facilities to support growth; and*
- d take forward new and improved strategic facilities, such as the North Dorset Trailway; and*
- e promote the public enjoyment of wildlife, where this is compatible with maintaining biodiversity; and*
- f identify opportunities to work with partners at the local, district and sub-regional levels to deliver multiple key green infrastructure benefits.*

Development will be required to enhance existing and provide new green infrastructure to improve the quality of life of residents and deliver environmental benefits. All elements of green infrastructure should be provided on site in line with standards of provision set in the development plan unless:

- g it can be demonstrated that it would not be practical or viable to do so; or*
- h exceptionally, it could be demonstrated that greater benefits could be realised through off-site measures.*

Where the full requirement for green infrastructure is not provided on-site, development would be expected to provide new green infrastructure off site, and/or enhance (or make a contribution towards the enhancement of) existing green infrastructure off site.

Developments will also be expected to deliver, or contribute towards the delivery of:

- i the conservation and management of existing assets; and*
- j the creation of new sites and links including new or improved open space for children's play, outdoor sport and recreation; and*

k enhancement to the functionality, quality and connectivity of green infrastructure; and

l area-specific packages which achieve multiple benefits including those identified in Figure 7.2.

Neighbourhood plans should consider measures that assist in delivering key green infrastructure benefits as outlined in this policy, including the designation of local green space, where appropriate.”

Policy 17 – Gillingham states that:

“Sustainable Development Strategy

Gillingham’s role as the main service centre in the north of the District will be maintained and enhanced through:

a development and redevelopment within the settlement boundary , including the enhancement of the town centre and the mixed-use regeneration of the Station Road area; and

b the development of a strategic site allocation (SSA) to the south of the town; and

c the development of a range and choice of employment sites, including the southern extension of Brickfields Business Park; and

d an enhanced green infrastructure network focused primarily on the three river corridors through the town.

Growth will be taken forward in ways which respect the town’s environmental constraints, support its role, function and identity and contribute to making it more self-contained. The complementary approach of the Local Plan and the Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan will ensure the town benefits from growth to become a more vibrant and thriving place to live and work.

Environment and Climate Change

The impact of flooding and climate change on the town will be addressed by:

e taking account of the risks of fluvial, groundwater and surface water flooding in new development; and

f the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems into new developments.

The town’s natural and historic built environment will be protected and enhanced.

Meeting Housing Needs

At least 2,200 homes will be provided at Gillingham during the period 2011 – 2031. In addition to infilling and regeneration within the settlement boundary, Gillingham’s housing needs will be met through:

g the development of a SSA to the south of the town, including on land adjacent to Lodden Lakes; land east of Ham, and land south of Ham; and

- h new homes, particularly flats above shops and offices, to support the mixed-use regeneration of land at Station Road to the south of the town centre; and*
- i the development of the land to the south and south-west of Bay.*

Supporting Economic Development

Employment needs in the town for the period up to 2031 will be met through:

- j the mixed-use regeneration of the Station Road area, to the south of the town centre, for a range of employment uses, particularly offices; and*
- k the development of land to the south of Brickfields Business Park for a range of employment uses; and*
- l the development of land on Kingsmead Business Park for a local centre and/or for a range of employment uses; and*
- m the development of land at Neal's Yard Remedies, Peacemarsh for the expansion of Neal's Yard Remedies or alternatively the provision of other high value businesses, and*
- n the retention of existing employment sites.*

In the period up to 2031, additional retail floorspace will be brought forward:

- o with a focus on comparison retailing as part of the mixed-use regeneration of the Station Road Area; and*
- p as local shops forming an integral part of the local centre to serve the SSA to the south of the town, in accordance with Policy 21.*

The main focus for additional retail provision and other town centre uses will be land within the existing Town Centre and land proposed for mixed-use regeneration at Station Road.

Infrastructure

In the period up to 2031, grey infrastructure to support growth will include:

- q a new link road between the B3081 and B3092 through the SSA to the south of the town; and*
- r the enhancement of the railway station as a public transport hub and the improvement of the town centre's pedestrian and cycle links with the railway station and Waitrose; and*
- s the integration of new areas of housing development into the existing transport network through the provision of new routes/upgrading of existing routes, including pedestrian and cycle links to key destinations, such as the town centre, employment areas, schools and other community facilities; and*
- t upgrading of foul sewers and the town's sewage treatment works.*

In the period up to 2031, social infrastructure to support growth will include:

- u further improvement or expansion of the existing facilities at RiversMeet and the provision of a new community hall on the site; and*

v a new local centre to be provided as part of the SSA to the south of the town, which will include a new community hall, a new 2 form entry primary school and a new doctors' surgery; and

w the expansion of St Mary's The Virgin Primary School and the expansion of Gillingham High School.

A network of green infrastructure will be developed in and around Gillingham focusing primarily on the corridors of the River Stour, River Lodden and the Shreen Water.

In the period up to 2031, green infrastructure to support proposed growth will include:

x the retention, enhancement and extension of the sports pitches at and around the secondary school; and

y the provision of a green corridor along the valley of the River Lodden extending from Brickfields Business Park through new and existing housing developments at Ham to the sports pitches north of the railway line; and,

z the provision of formal and informal open spaces, sports pitches, play spaces and allotments in new areas of housing development, including the SSA."

Policy 20 – The Countryside states that:

"Stalbridge and the eighteen larger villages will form the focus for growth outside of the four main towns.

Development in the countryside outside defined settlement boundaries will only be permitted if:

a it is of a type appropriate in the countryside, as set out in the relevant policies of the Local Plan, summarised in Figure 8.5; or

b for any other type of development, it can be demonstrated that there is an 'overriding need' for it to be located in the countryside."

Policy 21 – Gillingham Strategic Site Allocation states that:

"A Master Plan Framework will be prepared for the whole of the southern extension of Gillingham to ensure that: the site will be developed in a comprehensive and coordinated manner; and facilities and infrastructure are provided and delivered in step with housing and employment development.

The Council will use the Master Plan Framework for the southern extension as a material consideration in the context of the requirements of the Local Plan which forms the main policy basis for determining any subsequent planning applications for development on the site. The Council will not support proposals for development within the southern extension prior to the production of (and consultation on) the Master Plan Framework and prior to its contents being agreed by the Council.

The Master Plan Framework (and any subsequent planning applications on or affecting the southern extension) should:

a reflect the conceptual framework for the site (including concept plan, concept statement and design principles), unless a departure from the concept plan or concept statement can be clearly justified; and

b demonstrate how the land use allocations, infrastructure and other requirements set out: in this policy; on the proposals map for the strategic site allocation; and in the other policies of the Local Plan, will be provided and delivered.

The Council's preferred approach is for developers to work together (and with the Council, key stakeholders and the community) to prepare the Master Plan Framework, which the Council would then agree. If necessary, the Council would consider producing a supplementary planning document or other planning document (or documents) to guide the future development of the southern extension.

Climate Change

The Master Plan Framework for the southern extension (and any subsequent planning application, or applications, for the site) should show how the causes and effects of climate change will be tackled by:

c incorporating energy efficiency and renewable energy measures in buildings, including measures to produce energy from renewables and low carbon sources to meet the requirements of the Government's zero carbon buildings policy; and

d consideration being given to the potential for a district heating

e scheme to serve, or to be incorporated into, the southern extension, should a suitable opportunity arise; and

f measures to address the risks of fluvial and surface water flooding; and

g incorporating sustainable drainage systems into the development.

Environment

The Master Plan Framework for the southern extension (and any subsequent planning application, or applications, for the site) should show how the natural and historic environment will be conserved and enhanced by:

h measures to integrate the southern extension into the wider landscape, particularly where the edge of development adjoins open countryside; and

i measures to conserve and enhance wildlife interests, including both habitats and species within and close to the southern extension; and

j the retention (in situ) and enhancement of significant archaeological features and their settings, including Kings Court Palace Scheduled Monument and Gillingham Park Boundary Bank Scheduled Monument.

Meeting Housing Needs

The Master Plan Framework for the southern extension should:

k show how the site will be developed with about 1,800 homes in total; and

l show how the delivery of housing will be phased over time making provision for about 1,800 homes to be delivered on the SSA in the period up to 2031; and

m show how the delivery of housing will be phased spatially based on the approach that development will commence adjacent to the existing built-up area of the town and spread out towards the boundaries of the site; and

n set out the mix of market and affordable homes, in terms of number of bedrooms, that should be delivered on the site, reflecting the proportions in Policy 7 – Delivering Homes, unless a different mix can be justified on the basis of local circumstances and agreed with the Council;

o set out that 25% of the total number of dwellings will be affordable, unless a different percentage can be justified on the basis of a site- based assessment of viability and agreed with the Council; and

p make provision for at least 50 affordable extra care units for the elderly, as part of the overall provision of affordable housing.

Any subsequent planning application, or applications, for the site should reflect the requirements for the provision of housing development set out above, or as amended in the Master Plan Framework.

Supporting Economic Development

The Master Plan Framework for the southern extension (and any relevant subsequent planning application, or applications, for the site) should:

q set out how the land to the south of Brickfields Business Park should be developed: with a range of employment uses; with a new access from the B3092; to be well screened in views from the south and west; and

r set out how the remaining undeveloped land at Kingsmead Business Park should be developed as part of a local centre in the Shaftesbury Road corridor to support the southern extension. In the event that the local centre does not include the remaining undeveloped land at Kingsmead Business Park, the Master Plan Framework (and any relevant subsequent planning applications), should show how the site will be developed with a range of employment uses.

Grey Infrastructure

The Master Plan Framework for the southern extension (and any relevant subsequent planning application, or applications, for the site) should make provision for:

s a 'principal street' linking New Road (B3092) and Shaftesbury Road (B3081), which will be designed as a bus route; and

t a permeable and legible network of well-defined streets and spaces within the southern extension, which are cycle and pedestrian friendly, including well-designed gateways to the town and accesses to different areas of development at key points. Links from the southern extension into the existing built-up area of the town should be primarily for pedestrians and cycles; and

u the closure of Cole Street Lane to vehicular through traffic, other than for access; and

v off-site highway improvements, particularly improvements to increase the capacity of the New Road (B3092) and Shaftesbury Road (B3081) junction; and improvements in the Shaftesbury Road/Le Neubourg Way corridor; and

w off-site measures, and contributions towards off-site measures, to support the use of public transport, cycling and walking. Such improvements will include the enhancement of Gillingham Railway Station and the completion, where practicable of gaps in existing cycle and pedestrian route networks between the town and the southern extension; and

x contributions towards the provision of a link road between the B3081 and the A30 at Enmore Green; and

y other grey infrastructure requirements to support the development of the southern extension including the upgrading of: foul sewers; the town's sewage treatment works; utilities; and telecommunications networks, including broadband.

Social Infrastructure

The Master Plan Framework for the southern extension (and any relevant subsequent planning application, or applications, for the site) should make provision for:

z a local centre in the Shaftesbury Road corridor to serve the southern extension, which will include: small scale local convenience shops; a 2 forms of entry primary school; a pre-school nursery; a community hall; health facilities (including a doctors' surgery, a dentist and a dispensing pharmacy); and other essential local facilities; and

aa the expansion of St Mary the Virgin Primary School (from 1 form of entry to 2) including the provision of land if required; and contributions towards the expansion of Gillingham High School; and

bb contributions towards improvements to, or the expansion of: Riversmeet (including a community hall); Gillingham Town Library; and Gillingham Fire Station.

Green Infrastructure

The Master Plan Framework for the southern extension (and any relevant subsequent planning application, or applications, for the site) should make provision for:

cc at least 8.5 hectares of formal public open space, including sport's pitches, children's play spaces, allotments and community orchards. At least 7 hectares should be provided as sports pitches and associated facilities. The preferred option is for sports pitches to be grouped in two clusters either side of the B3081; and

dd at least 26 hectares of informal public open space primarily along the river corridors providing: a landscape setting for development; enhanced habitats for wildlife; and off-road routes for pedestrians and cyclists within the SSA linking to the town and countryside; and

ee the retention, where practicable, of important trees, groups of trees and hedgerows on the southern extension site within public open spaces and publically accessible 'greenways'; and

ff the establishment of a sustainable drainage system across the southern extension utilising, where practicable, existing watercourses, ponds, ditches and the 'greenways' associated with the retained hedgerows; and

gg the retention of existing areas of strategic landscape planting and the establishment of new strategic landscape planting, particularly on the edges of the site to screen new development whilst also allowing views out of and into the site; and

hh contributions towards the provision or enhancement of green infrastructure off site."

Policy 24 – Design states that:

"Development should be designed to improve the character and quality of the area within which it is located. Proposals for development will be required to justify how the relevant aspects of development form address the relevant design principles and standards set out in Figures 10.1, 10.2 and 10.3 of this policy and how the design responds to the local context.

Developments will be permitted provided that the relevant aspects of development have been designed to reflect the relevant design principles and have satisfactorily addressed the relevant standards. A proposal that uses development forms which do not reflect the relevant design principles and standards, or which otherwise conflict with the design principles, will not be permitted. There may be circumstances where it is not appropriate to apply the design principles, aspects of form and/or space standards set out in Figures 10.1, 10.2 and 10.3 of this policy (for example, bin storage and laundry drying in town centre developments).

In certain circumstances, a well-designed 'contemporary' or 'modern' scheme will be acceptable.

Development proposals that are of an overbearing nature or where the enjoyment of the existing properties is significantly diminished will be refused.

Developers will be required to engage with the local community and offer realistic opportunities for local people to influence development proposals where practical and feasible to do so. Where existing local guidelines have been established, these should be reflected in development proposals.

Developments will be required to provide adequate space for cycle parking, storage for bins and recyclables and in addition in the case of residential developments, laundry drying.

Developments will be expected to incorporate existing mature trees and hedgerows and other landscape features into the public realm of the development layout and provide sufficient additional landscape planting to integrate the development into its surroundings."

A1.16 The saved policies in the North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan, adopted in 2003 that are relevant to the landscape and visual assessment are as follows:

Policy 1.12-River Valleys

"Development will not be permitted within the River Valley areas defined on the Proposals Maps where;

- (i) the water quality of the river would be adversely affected by effluent pollution from the development.*
- (ii) the wildlife and their habitats, the vegetation and the landscape of the river valleys would be adversely affected by the development."*

Policy GR71

"Within the Gillingham Royal Forest Project Area it is proposed to;

- (i) enhance the landscape and aid the diversification of agriculture through the provision of additional woodland planting*
 - (ii) provide and co-ordinate additional countryside recreational facilities*
 - (iii) provide interpretative/tourism/educational material and facilities*
- Development will be approved in the area if the above objectives are met and the proposal is in keeping with the character of the area."*

Policy GH3

"The following areas are designated as "Areas of Local Character"

- (i) Bay*
- (ii) Colesbrook*
- (iii) Eccliffe*
- (iv) Kings Court*
- (v) Lodbourn*
- (vi) Lodden Bridge and New Road*
- (vii) Peacemarsh*
- (viii) Wavering Lane*
- (ix) Wyke*

Within these areas, development will only be approved if the proposal respects their individual local character."

Policy GH19

"A riverside footpath/cycleway link is proposed to connect the Shaftesbury Road at Lodden Bridge, with Kings Court Palace, via a new bridge over the River Lodden."

Policy G#20

"A river bridge is proposed over the river Lodden to allow for a footpath/cycleway link between Lodden View and the proposed Ham Primary School."

Appendix A part 2: Assessment methodology

To be read with reference to figures A2.1 to A2.6.

Introduction

- A2.1 The following paragraphs set out the methodology that has been followed in the baseline study of the existing landscape, townscape and visual amenity and the subsequent assessment of the effects of the proposals.

LVIA Guidelines

- A2.2 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been carried out in accordance with the following best practice guidelines:
- The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, (GLVIA) 3rd Edition, Landscape Institute (LI) and Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) (2013)
 - An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, Natural England (October 2014)
 - SNH Visual Representation of Wind Farms guidance, version 2.1 December 2014
 - Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11, Photography and Photomontage in Landscape and Visual Assessments.

Role of the LVIA

- A2.3 Paragraph 2.21 of the GLVIA states that there are two distinct components of the LVIA:

“Assessment of landscape effects: assessing effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right;

Assessment of visual effects: assessing the effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.”

Definition of landscape

- A2.4 In describing landscape, paragraph 2.19 of the GLVIA states that:

“Landscape results from the interplay of the physical, natural and cultural components of our surroundings. Different combinations of these elements and their spatial distribution create the distinctive character of landscapes in different places, allowing different landscapes to be mapped, analysed and described. Character is not just about the physical elements and features that make up a landscape, but also embraces the aesthetic, perceptual and experiential aspects of the landscape that make different places distinctive.”

Definition of visual amenity

- A2.5 In the GVLIA glossary defines the meaning of visual amenity as:

“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.”

- A2.6 The methodology for assessing both the landscape and visual effects are outlined in paragraphs A2.34 to A2.67.

Assessment process

- A2.7 The process of landscape and visual assessment (LVIA) includes the following stages:
- **Project description** – Describes the Proposed Development, identifying the main features of the proposals, and establishes parameters such as maximum extents of the development or sizes of the elements.
 - **Baseline studies** – Establishes the existing nature of the landscape and visual environment in the study area, including any relevant changes likely to occur independently of the development proposal. Includes information on the value attached to the different environmental resources.
 - **Identification and description of effects** – Systematically identifies and describes the effects that are likely to occur, including whether they are adverse or beneficial.
 - **Assessing the significant of effects** – Systematically and transparently assesses the likely significance of the effects identified.
 - **Mitigation** – Makes proposals for measures designed to avoid / prevent, reduce or offset (or compensate for) any significant negative (adverse) effects.

Professional judgement

- A2.8 Professional judgement is an important consideration in the determination of the overall landscape and visual effects and even with qualified and experienced professionals there can be differences in the judgements made.

- A2.9 Paragraph 2.23 of the GLVIA states that:

“While there is some scope for quantitative measurement of some relatively objective matters, for example the number of trees lost to construction of a new mine, much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements, for example about what effect the introduction of a new development or land use change may have on visual amenity or about the significance of change in the character of the landscape and whether it is positive or negative.”

- A2.10 Paragraph 2.24 of the GLVIA states that:

“In all cases there is a need for the judgements that are made to be reasonable and based on clear and transparent methods so that the reasoning applied at different stages can be traced and examined by others.”

Baseline assessment

- A2.11 The landscape and visual baseline conditions were established by:

Landscape	Visual
Identify elements and features Identify landscape character and key characteristics Consider value attached to landscape Identify landscape receptors	Identify extent of possible visibility (ZTV) Identify visual receptors (people) who may be affected Identify and select representative, illustrative and specific viewpoints

Site familiarisation

- A2.12 The Site and surrounding area were visited in March and September 2015 to obtain familiarity with the landscape. Field studies and desk studies of photographs, aerial photographs, map information, landscape character assessments and statutory and emerging planning policy documents have enabled the recording of landscape elements such as topography, drainage, land use, development, vegetation and other features.

Defining the study area

- A2.13 The study area defines the scope of the assessment. The study area includes the Site itself and the wider area around it, within which the Proposed Development may have a significant influence. The extent of the study area has been established using a zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) of the Proposed Development in combination with observations made on Site. During the assessment process the study area may change as a result of fieldwork studies or changes to the proposals.
- A2.14 A 2.5km study area was chosen, as the visibility beyond this distance will become limited and the Proposed Development is unlikely to have any significant effects.

Identifying landscape character, elements and features

- A2.15 Published and adopted landscape character assessments (LCA) prepared by relevant authorities at varying levels, from national through to local assessments, have been referred to in order to identify the baseline landscape character, resources and associated value. These established assessments have been reviewed in terms of their status, scale and level of detail provided and therefore suitability for use within the LVIA. This review also took account of the date in which the assessments were carried out and how relevant the content is in relation to the current landscape characteristics.
- A2.16 National and county level LCA generally give a broad scale assessment which often provides an overview of the landscape context and setting but does not necessarily represent the local landscape characteristic of the Site and surrounding area. Local LCA provide more detail on the types of landscape that occur in the study area. They are therefore considered appropriate as a basis for describing the key characteristics and are used to inform the description of the landscapes that may be affected by the proposals.
- A2.17 Detailed fieldwork carried out within the Site and immediate surroundings is used to check the applicability of the landscape character assessments throughout the study area, and where variations in the landscape are identified since the LCA was adopted, modifications are made or supplementary information is provided in the baseline assessment.

- A2.18 ZTV analysis and field studies have been carried out to determine which landscape character areas will be physically or perceptually affected by the proposals.

Identifying possible extent of visibility (ZTV)

- A2.19 Computer generated mapping has been used in combination with fieldwork, to assess the potential visibility of the proposals. The extent of visibility over which the Proposed Development may theoretically be seen, Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), is provided in figure 1.7.
- A2.20 The ZTV has been derived from a Digital Surface Modelling. The DSM used was based on a 2 m grid provided by Bluesky. This uses photogrammetrically derived information during summer that provides a highly detailed three-dimensional model of the landscape and townscape. Topographic features including landform, woodland, settlements, individual buildings, isolated trees, copses, hedgerows, embankments and other minor topographic features, out to a distance of 2.5km from the application boundary, are all modelled. The accuracy of the DSM falls within acceptable limits; however, there are potential discrepancies between the DSM and the actual landform where there are minor topographic features that are too small to be picked up. The Bluesky data can pick up the majority of the woodland and buildings, although areas can be missed between the 2 m grid.
- A2.21 For this project, the ZTV has been generated using the DSM and the following proposed building height parameters:
- Up to 9m
 - Up to 11m
 - Up to 12m
 - Up to 14m
 - Schools up to 12m
- A2.22 The height from which the Proposed Development would be seen was set at 1.6 m (mid way between the average heights for men and women given in the GLVIA). A professional judgement has been made for this assessment that approximately 2.5km is the distance beyond which proposals of this scale, nature and context would not have a significant effect on either landscape / townscape character or views. The resulting ZTV, figure 1.7, illustrates the extent to which any part of the proposals (large or small) is potentially visible from the surrounding area.
- A2.23 During fieldwork, any significant discrepancies in the ZTV are recorded and later amended. Fieldwork was confined to accessible parts of the Site, public rights of way, transport routes and other publicly accessible areas.

Identifying visual receptors

- A2.24 The baseline study will have determined the individuals and/or defined groups of people who have the potential to be affected by the proposals. These are referred to as visual receptors.

A2.25 Paragraph 6.13 of the GVLIA states that visual receptors may include:

“...people living in the area, people who work there, people passing through the landscape on road, rail or other forms of transport, people visiting promoted landscapes or attractions, and people engaged in recreation of different types”.

Identifying viewpoints

A2.26 Following analysis of the ZTV and fieldwork, a series of viewpoints from which the proposals will be seen by the individual or groups of visual receptors were identified. To illustrate all potential viewpoints from which the proposals will be seen by the different visual receptors within the study area is not practical and is unnecessary for the purposes of the EIA. Therefore viewpoints selected for inclusion in the LVIA broadly fall into three groups:

- **Representative** viewpoints (represent the experience of different types of visual receptors). For example, certain points may be chosen to represent the views of users from a particular public right of way.
- **Specific** viewpoints (a particular view from a key or promoted viewpoint). For example, viewpoints with a particular cultural landscape associations.
- **Illustrative** viewpoints to demonstrate a particular effect/issue. For example, the restricted visibility at a certain location.

A2.27 Generally viewpoints are selected from publicly accessible land and/or the transport routes. Representative or specific viewpoints from these areas can take into consideration that similar views may be afforded from receptors of residential properties.

Future baseline

A2.28 In describing potential effects, account must also be taken of ongoing changes to the area surrounding the Site, which is described as future baseline. Those schemes that are under construction or have planning consent, which it can be reasonably assumed will be constructed, are to be included in the assessments baseline. Understanding and describing how the proposals will be experienced in the immediate context of existing and future developments is important to reaching accurate and realistic conclusions on the overall effects.

Description of proposals

A2.29 The planning application drawings and design and access statement provide a description of the proposals. This report summarises the elements that are likely to give rise to landscape or visual effects. The effects on landform and on existing landscape features such as vegetation are also described. Proposals for landscape measures such as new planting are set out.

Mitigation measures

A2.30 The GLVIA describes three forms of mitigation measures. These are:

- *“Primary measures, developed through the iterative design process, which have become integrated or embedded into the project design;*

- *Standard construction and operational management practices for avoiding and reducing environmental effects;*
- *Secondary measures, designed to address any residual adverse effects remaining after primary measures and standard construction practices have been incorporated into the scheme."*

A2.31 The first two forms are referred to as primary mitigation, while the last is referred to as secondary mitigation. At all stages of the iterative design development, the purpose has been to prevent/avoid, reduce and where possible offset or remedy potential adverse effects by including primary mitigation measures and standard construction and operational management practices. The plans illustrated in figures 1.4 to 1.6 incorporate these primary measures that are used to assess predicted potential effects.

A2.32 Secondary mitigation measures are those that have not been designed into the proposals that form part of this application. Potential secondary mitigation measures are described and considered in the assessment. Where significant adverse effects remain after secondary mitigation, these are referred to as residual effects.

Landscape assessment

A2.33 The landscape assessment judges the potential effects of the proposals on the landscape receptors that have been identified. The significance of a landscape effect is determined by consideration of the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of the landscape effect as a result of the proposals. These are defined in the following paragraphs.

Criteria for assessing potential significance of landscape effects

Sensitivity of landscape receptor

A2.34 The sensitivity of the landscape is assessed by combining the considerations of two factors:

- Value
- Susceptibility to specific change

A2.35 The **value** of the landscape receptor is defined in the GLVIA (paragraph 5.19) as:

"The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society, bearing in mind that a landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons."

A2.36 The value of the landscape receptor is established at the baseline stage and considers two key categories as highlighted in paragraph 5.44 of the GLVIA:

- *"The value of the landscape character types or areas based on review of any designations at both national and local levels, and, where there are no designations, judgements based on criteria that can be used to establish landscape value;*

- *The value of individual contributors to landscape character, especially the key characteristics, which may include individual elements of the landscape, particular landscape features, notable aesthetic, perceptual or experiential qualities, and combinations of the contributors."*

A2.37 Landscape designations should not be over relied upon to signify the value of the landscape receptors. Other factors that can help in the identification of valued landscapes include:

- Landscape quality (condition)
- Scenic quality
- Rarity
- Representativeness
- Conservation interests
- Recreational value
- Perceptual aspects including wildness and/or tranquillity
- Associations.

A2.38 In the absence of a formal landscape designation or landscape character area, judgement on the value of a landscape is based on the criteria set out in paragraph 2.38.

A2.39 The landscape receptors **susceptibility** to specific change is defined in the GLVIA (paragraph 5.40) as follows:

"The ability of the landscape receptor (whether it be the overall character or quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area, or an individual element and/or feature, or a particular aesthetic and perceptual aspect) to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and /or achievement of landscape planning policy and strategies."

A2.40 Paragraph 5.42 of the GLVIA also states that:

"Since landscape effects in LVIA are particular to both the specific landscape in question and the specific nature of the proposed development, the assessment of susceptibility must be tailored to the project."

A2.41 Factors for judging susceptibility to change include:

- Vulnerability or robustness of elements of the landscape
- The tolerance, i.e. the extent to which elements of the landscape can be replaced, restored or may be altered
- The level or role elements of the landscape have in defining the character of the landscape
- The landscape sensitivity to the specific type of development proposed.

A2.42 The guidance set out in figure A2.1 has been used in this assessment to arrive at an overall evaluation of landscape sensitivity. Both susceptibility to change and

value are judged as high, medium, low or negligible based on the criteria shown. There may be circumstances where the weighting given to some criteria may be greater than others. The combination of susceptibility and value produces an overall evaluation of landscape sensitivity, which is ultimately a matter of professional judgement, and is defined in this chapter as high, medium, low or negligible.

Magnitude of landscape effect

A2.43 The magnitude of effect is assessed in terms of:

- Size/scale
- Geographical extent
- Duration
- Reversibility.

A2.44 The **size or scale** of an effect is assessed by determining the degree of change that would arise from the proposals. The effect of both loss and addition of new features is judged as major, partial, minor or very minor based on the criteria set out in figure A2.2. The judgements may take into account:

- The extent of existing landscape elements that will be lost (this may be quantified)
- The degree to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are altered through the loss of or addition of landscape resources / elements. For example removal of hedges may change a small-scale intimate landscape into a large scale, open one.
- Whether the effect changes any of the key characteristics which are distinctive to the landscape character.

A2.45 The **geographical extent** of effects is assessed by determining the area over which the landscape effects will be felt. The effect is considered across varying scales of wide, intermediate, localised or limited based on the criteria set out in figure A2.2. In general, the effects will vary according to the nature of the project and may not be relevant on every occasion.

A2.46 The **duration** of effects is assessed by the period of time over which the degree of change to the landscape would arise from the development. Duration is judged as long term, medium term or short term based on the criteria set out in figure A2.2.

A2.47 The **reversibility** of an effect assesses the prospects or practicality of the effect being reversed. The effect is judged as reversible, partially reversible or permanent as set out in figure A2.2.

A2.48 Duration and reversibility can be considered together so that a temporary or partially reversible effect is linked to definition of how long that effect may last.

A2.49 The guidance notes and criteria set out in figure A2.2 have been used to make a judgement on the magnitude of landscape effect for this assessment. The magnitude of landscape effect is determined by combining the judgements of the

four individual factors of size/scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility. There may be circumstances where the weighting given to some criteria may be greater than others. The combination of all four factors produces an overall evaluation of magnitude of landscape effect, which is ultimately a matter of professional judgement, and is defined in this chapter as large, medium, small or negligible.

Judging the overall significance of landscape effect

- A2.50 The degree of the effects on the landscape resources is considered from a sequentially combined evaluation of the landscape sensitivity and the magnitude of effect. The matrix in figure A2.3 has been used to guide this judgement. The definitions used are included in that figure. They are applied to both potential effects, and to residual effects. If the degree of effect is moderate or above then the effect is considered to be significant.
- A2.51 The GLVIA guidance also states that thought must be given to whether the likely significant landscape effects are judged to be positive (beneficial) or negative (adverse). The GLVIA (paragraph 5.37) suggests that when judging the effects to be adverse or beneficial the factors to be considered should include, but not be restricted to the following:

- *"The degree to which the proposal fits within the existing landscape character*
- *The contribution to the landscape that the development may make in its own right, usually by virtue of good design, even if it is in contrast to existing character."*

Visual assessment

- A2.52 The visual assessment judges the potential effects of the proposals on the visual receptors that have been identified. The significance of a visual effect is determined by consideration of the sensitivity of the visual receptors and the magnitude of the visual effect on visual amenity. These are defined in the following paragraphs.

Criteria for assessing potential significance of visual effects

Sensitivity of visual receptors

- A2.53 A visual receptor is a particular person or group of people who would be experiencing the view or are likely to be affected at a specific viewpoint.
- A2.54 The sensitivity of the visual receptor is assessed by combining the judgements of two factors:
- Value attached to views
 - Susceptibility of visual receptors to change.
- A2.55 The GLVIA suggests that when judging the **value** attached to the views experienced (paragraph 6.37), account should be taken of:
- *"recognition of the value attached to particular views, for example in relation to heritage assets, or through planning designations;*

- *indicators of the value attached to views by visitors, for example through appearances in guidebooks or on tourist maps, provision of facilities for their enjoyment and references to them in literature or art."*

A2.56 The value attached to the views experienced is established at the baseline stage and considers these two key categories:

- The quality of the view/visual experience i.e. attractive unspoilt landscape
- The associations which contribute to the visual experience i.e. cultural/historical/ecological interests and planning designations.

A2.57 The visual receptors' **susceptibility** to change is defined in the GLVIA (paragraph 6.32) as follows:

- *"the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations; and*
- *the extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focused on the views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations."*

A2.58 The guidance set out in figure A2.4 has been used in this assessment to arrive at an overall evaluation of the sensitivity of the visual receptors. Both susceptibility to change and value are judged as high, medium, low or negligible based on the criteria shown. There may be circumstances where the weighting given to some criteria may be greater than others. The combination of susceptibility and value produces an overall evaluation of visual receptor sensitivity, which is ultimately a matter of professional judgement, and is defined in this chapter as high, medium, low or negligible.

Magnitude of visual effect

A2.59 The magnitude of visual effect is assessed in terms of:

- Size/scale
- Geographical extent
- Duration
- Reversibility.

A2.60 The **size or scale** of a visual effect is assessed by determining the degree of change that would arise from the proposals. The effect of loss, addition or change to the composition of the view through the introduction of development is judged as major, partial, minor or very minor based on the criteria set out in figure A2.5. The GLVIA (paragraph 6.39) suggests that when judging the visual effects the following be taken account of:

- *"the scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development;*
- *the degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture;*

- *the nature of the view of the proposed development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpses."*

A2.61 The **geographical extent** of visual effects is assessed by determining the area over which the visual effects will be seen. The visual effect is considered across varying scales of wide, intermediate, localised or limited based on the criteria set out in figure A2.5. The GLVIA (paragraph 6.40) suggests that extent is likely to reflect:

- *"the angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;*
- *the distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development;*
- *the extent of the area over which the changes would be visible."*

A2.62 The **duration** of effects is assessed by the period of time over which the degree of change to the visual receptor would arise from the development. Duration is judged as long term, medium term or short term based on the criteria set out in figure A2.5.

A2.63 The **reversibility** of an effect assesses the prospects and the practicality of the effect being reversed. The effect is judged as reversible, partially reversible or permanent as set out in figure A2.5.

A2.64 The guidance notes and criteria set out in figure A2.5 have been used to make a judgement on the magnitude of visual effect for this assessment. The magnitude of visual effect is determined by combining the judgements of the four individual factors of size/scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility. There may be circumstances where the weighting given to some criteria may be greater than others. The combination of all four factors produces an overall evaluation of magnitude of visual effect, which is ultimately a matter of professional judgement, and is defined in this chapter as large, medium, small or negligible.

Judging the overall significance of visual effects

A2.65 The degree of the effects on the visual receptor is considered from a sequentially combined evaluation of the visual receptor sensitivity and the magnitude of effect. The matrix in figure A2.6 has been used to guide this judgement. The definitions used are included in that figure. They are applied to both potential effects and to residual effects. If the degree of effect is moderate or above then the effect is considered to be significant.

A2.66 The GLVIA guidance also states that thought must be given to whether the likely significant visual effects are judged to be positive (beneficial) or negative (adverse). This is based on professional judgement as to whether the effects will affect the quality of the visual experience for those people who will see the Proposed Development, given the nature of the existing views. The GLVIA (paragraph 6.44) suggests that when judging the effects to be adverse or beneficial the factors to be considered should include but not be restricted to the following:

- *"Effects on people who are particularly sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity are more likely to be significant"*

- *Effects on people at recognised and important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes are more likely to be significant*
- *Large-scale changes which introduce new, non-characteristic or discordant or intrusive elements into the view are more likely to be significant than small changes or changes involving features already present within the view."*

Taking account of effects throughout the life of the project

A2.67 The degree of landscape and visual effects can vary considerably during the life cycle of the project. Within the assessment a description of the development is provided at each stage in the life cycle of the project to assist in understanding the scheme and the predicted landscape and visual effects of the development. The description of effects considers the following project stages:

- During construction
- At completion (post construction - year 0) including seasonal variation and night time
- Year 15 of operation.

Appendix A part 3: Photographic images methodology

Photographic survey

- A3.1 The aim is to recreate as closely as possible what the human eye can see. 50 mm is a traditionally agreed focal length for matching a photograph to the actual view seen, but a range between 45 mm to 55 mm is often used.
- A3.2** For this assessment, during the summer a Canon EOS 6D camera was used in conjunction with a 50mm prime lens. The EOS 6D employs a sensor of similar size to a traditional SLR therefore the 50mm lens used results in a focal length of 50mm as no modification factor is applied. During the winter a Nikon D80 Digital SLR zoom lens camera was used. This has an image sensor magnification of 1.5, which when used with a 35mm lens setting results in a focal length of 52.5mm ($1.5 \times 35 = 52.5$). This methodology is in accordance with the LI Advice note 01/11, *Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual impact assessment*.
- A3.3 In this assessment, the photographs are taken at approximately 1.6 m above ground level using a tripod.
- A3.4 GPS is used to provide a six-figure National Grid reference for the view. The accuracy of this device can vary (depending on factors such as satellite coverage, proximity of buildings, tree coverage etc.) so these figures are then checked on detailed OS survey plans to give a more accurate reference.
- A3.5 For panoramic photographs an overlap of between 35% and 50% of each frame is used to allow the creation of a seamless panoramic, using Photoshop.



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