

Architecture
Planning
Urban Design
Landscape



ALPHIN PROPERTY
PITT STREET, DARFIELD
LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

V.01: June 2025

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Introduction

John R Paley Associates (JRP) has been commissioned by Alphin Properties to undertake this Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) for the proposed development land off Pitt Street, Darfield.

The LVA identifies landscape and visual effects that are likely to result from changes arising from the proposed development, and assesses the magnitude of change in the context of receptor (landscape and visual) sensitivity.

This LVA was undertaken during June 2025.

Scope of Study

The study will examine a geographic area which can be potentially affected by the development, this equates to an area of approximately 2km radius centred on the site.

Site Description

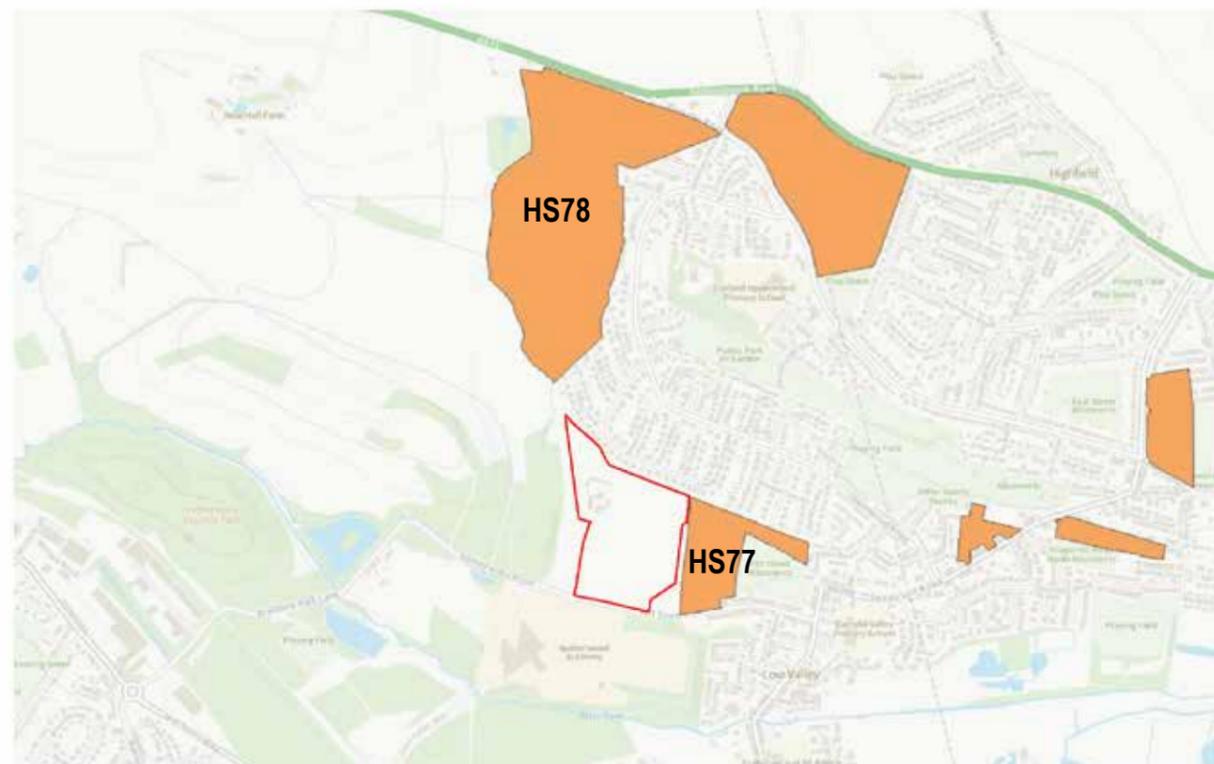
The site is located to the southwest of the Darfield settlement, with Pitt Street bordering the site to the south. The site falls slightly southwards towards the Pitt Street boundary. The highest point of the site is in the vicinity of Low Valley Farm at 38m, in the northern part of the site.

The site is irregularly shaped, the northern boundary is formed by the rears of bungalow properties on Lombard Crescent. The eastern boundary is with a recently constructed residential development by Barratt David Wilson which is housing allocation HS77 in the adopted Local Plan. A non-definitive footpath runs along this boundary. Finally, the western boundary is formed by an existing field boundary and farm access track. The overall site area is approximately 7.21ha.

The site consists of a series of paddocks divided by hedges and wire fences. The north western corner of the site is Low Valley Farm, a stone farmhouse with barns and various outbuildings, served by the track which leads from Pitt Street.

There are no watercourses or public rights of way within the site. A bridleway and public footpath runs north-south approximately 160m west of the site.

A further allocated housing site HS78 lies to the north west of the site - Land to the south of Doncaster Road, Darfield Indicative number of dwellings 441



Barnsley Local Plan Extract



Location Plan

Introduction

Development Description

The outline application proposes up to 200 residential units with associated private gardens, streets, public open space, green and blue infrastructure.

This appraisal considers the landscape and visual effects of the proposals for the whole site as illustrated by the adjacent Masterplan drawing and the Landscape Strategy shown on the following page.



Proposed Masterplan (not to scale)

Introduction

Landscape Strategy

The landscape strategy shown opposite has been created to guide the detailed landscape proposals for the site as part of an iterative process between the landscape and visual appraisal and the development design. Key elements of the mitigation proposals are as follows:

1. Northern Tip

This triangular area at the northern extremity of the site is to be planted with a copse of native woodland trees to extend the screening effect of the existing tree belt on the western boundary. Consideration is to be given to not overshadowing the gardens of existing properties with the use of smaller species close to the boundary.

2. Northern Boundary

The amenity of existing properties on this boundary is to be protected. Existing trees and scrub areas should be retained where practical to do so. Additional trees are to be planted within rear gardens to filter views between new and existing properties. Species should be selected so as not to create undue overshadowing through height and dense foliage. Rear gardens should be a minimum of 15m in length to provide adequate space for existing and proposed trees while protecting the visual amenity of existing residents.

3. Central Open Space

A LEAP playspace is to be provided in a central location, set within an attractive well designed open space. Diagonal footpaths provide direct pedestrian links between the adjacent streets and playspace. The space is to be overlooked on all sides by dwellings.

4. Eastern Buffer

A buffer of open space is to be provided between the site boundary and streets or dwellings of minimum 5m. Dwellings are to face on to the buffer to overlook the area of public realm. Hedges should be used to define the boundary between public and private realm, including shared private drives and plot frontages.

5. Southern Open Space

This open space is at the lowest point of the site and will be the location for a surface water attenuation basin and dual pumping station. Subject to adoption requirements the basin should be designed to maximise biodiversity including an area of permanent standing water and wetland planting. The pumping station should be softened by hedges and/or scrub planting and trees.

The existing hedge to Pitt Street is to be retained and supplemented with hedgerow trees.

The space is to have a naturalistic landscape treatment with native tree copses and species-rich meadow areas. Hedges should be used to define the boundary between public and private realm, including shared private

drives and plot frontages.

6. Primary Streets

Primary streets are to have a verge and avenue tree planting to one side, of minimum width 3m. The avenue of street trees will provide legibility and establish a street hierarchy as well as softening views of built form and improving air quality.

7. Southern Buffer

As the most prominent site frontage to Pitt Street this area should provide a buffer of at least 10m between the site boundary and private curtilage, with dwellings facing towards Pitt Street to overlook the space. The existing hedge to Pitt Street is to be retained and supplemented with further tree planting. Additional hedges should be used to define the boundary between public and private realm, including shared private drives and plot frontages.

8. Western Buffer

A buffer of open space is to be provided between the site boundary and streets or dwellings of minimum 5m. Dwellings are to face on to the buffer to overlook the area of public realm. Hedges should be used to define the boundary between public and private realm, including shared private drives and plot frontages. The existing hedge and tree belt to the boundary are to be retained and supplemented with further tree planting. A pedestrian link should lead from the primary street in the centre of the site to Pitt Street. This will provide a traffic free route to school which is along the alignment of the existing farm access track with a mature hedge to the west.



Landscape Strategy (not to scale)

Methodology

The process of Appraisal will be guided by the third edition of the document 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', published by Landscape Institute with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.

Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVIA) is a tool used to identify and appraise the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity.

The two distinct components of LVA are:

1. Appraisal of landscape effects: assess effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right
2. Appraisal of visual effects: assessing effects on views experienced by people and on the general visual amenity.

This report will separate these elements into two distinct sections so that the differences can be clearly appreciated.

To accompany the description of baseline and assessment information, a series of classifications have been applied to the landscape character of the site and each visual receptor. These act as a summary and place a defined value on; the sensitivity of the character area/visual receptor, the magnitude of change and the subsequent effect of the development.

Baseline

Sensitivity of Receptors

Landscape

This is an analysis of the existing situation within and surrounding the site. It draws upon information gathered during a desk study and field survey work.

Planning designations intended to protect landscape and visual amenity are also recorded.

The base line will be established through the analysis of existing landscape designations and character assessments. The sensitivity of the landscape to change is the degree to which a particular landscape can accommodate changes, or new features without significant detrimental effects to its essential characteristics.

Physical features or Landscape Elements will also be analysed.

Visual

The sensitivity of visual receptors will depend on three key factors:

The visual receptor's activity whilst exposed to the view (work, recreational activities, resident, travelling)

Degree of exposure to view

Period of exposure to view

The nature of a landscape receptor or a visual receptor is defined as being High/Medium/Low, where High is the most sensitive, in the table below.

Where viewpoint locations have more than one receptor, for example motorists and walkers, the impacts for those with the greatest anticipated sensitivity will be used to determine the overall nature of effect, ensuring that the worst case scenario is reported.

Nature	Landscape Character	Visual Receptor
Low	Many detracting features, which are likely to be dominant. Few or no features worthy of conservation. Scope for positive enhancement. Weak or degraded landscape structure. Weak or negative character. Poor condition. Poor sense of place. Visually poor. Aesthetically unsatisfactory or unpleasant.	Users of outdoor recreational facilities with restricted views or where the activity is focussed within the area. Occupants of industrial premises. People in their place of work. Users of main roads or passengers on public transport on main routes.
Medium	Visually notable. Aesthetically satisfactory or uninspiring/some detracting features. Some features worthy of conservation. Recognisable landscape structure. Positive character. Moderate condition. Reasonable sense of place.	Users of Public Rights of Way/Public Open Space with restricted views, in less sensitive areas or where there are significant existing intrusive features. Schools and other institutional buildings, and their outdoor areas. Motorised users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside. Where attention is focussed upon often narrow and winding routes. Residential properties with views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views from ground floor windows will be oblique or partially obscured by garden and/or other intervening vegetation.
High	Distinct features worthy of conservation. Designated landscapes such as National Parks, Registered Parks and Gardens or designated buildings/structures where landscape character contributes to its designation. Strong landscape structure. Strong positive character. Good condition. Strong sense of place. Visually distinctive. Aesthetically pleasing/occasional detracting features	Visitors to recognised viewpoints or beauty spots, or to designated buildings or landscapes where the wider landscape setting contributes to or adds value to the experience. Users of outdoor recreational facilities with predominantly open views where the purpose of that recreation is enjoyment of the countryside – e.g National Parks Residential properties with predominantly open views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views will normally be from principal living rooms and from windows of rooms in use during the day. Users of Public Rights of Way/Public Open Space with predominantly open views and of recreational use. Non-motorised users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside

Appraisal of Effects of Proposed Development

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change is the ‘combination of the scale, extent and duration’ of the development and its impact on landscape receptors and visual receptors. In the case of landscape effects this relates to:

- The size, extent or degree of change to landscape character or individual landscape features;
- Whether there is a direct impact resulting in the loss of landscape features or a change beyond the land take of the scheme having an impact on the character of the area; and,
- Whether the impact is permanent or temporary.
- For visual effects this relates to:
 - Degree of change to existing views;
 - Distance of the receptor from the application site; and,
 - Whether the impact is permanent or temporary.

The magnitude of change may also be Negligible or No Change and in this instance the resulting Effect Significance would also be Negligible or No Change as the application development would hardly be seen or not seen at all or the loss to landscape features and the character of the area would experience very little or no change.

Magnitude of Change	Landscape Character	Visual Amenity
High	High degree of loss or major alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the landscape character. Introduction of elements considered to be uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.	Where the proposals become the only dominant feature in the scene or would form a significant and immediately apparent element which would affect the overall impression of the view.
Medium	Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the landscape character. Introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not necessarily be considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.	Where proposals would form a visible and recognisable new feature in the scene but may not be immediately apparent, or become the dominant feature in the view.
Low	Minor loss of or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the landscape character. Introduction of elements may not be uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.	The proposals constitute only a minor component of the wider view and may not be immediately apparent to the casual observer. Awareness of the proposals would not have a marked effect on the overall quality of the scene.
Negligible	Very minor loss of or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the landscape character. Introduction of elements are not uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape.	The proposal is largely indiscernible and/or they are at such a distance that they are scarcely appreciated. Consequently they have little effect on the scene.
No Change	No change to the landscape character is experienced.	No change to the view is experienced.

Effects

Likely effects of the development upon the landscape and visual baseline will be systematically identified and described. In carrying out the appraisal it will not be established whether the effects arising are or are not significant given that the exercise is not being undertaken for EIA purposes.

Determination of the nature of an effect is a result of judging whether the introduction of a proposed development would be of benefit or detriment to the existing landscape character or view. Therefore, the impact of a proposed development can be adverse or beneficial.

The following system of categorisation is used for the nature of the effects:

- Adverse

The key characteristics of the existing landscape or view would be weakened by the introduction of the proposed development.

- Neutral

The key characteristics would neither be weakened nor strengthened by the proposed development.

- Beneficial

The key characteristics of the existing landscape or view would be strengthened by the introduction of the proposed development.

Summary of Effects

Tables accompanied by narrative, non-technical text to be used to summarise the likely effects of the development.

Mitigation & Conclusion

As this study is aimed at informing the development proposals as part of an iterative process a detailed scheme of mitigation will be put forward as a Landscape Strategy.

The Landscape Strategy will seek to address both the landscape and visual effects of the development, providing a framework for built development. The strategy will be presented in plan form with supporting narrative.

Illustrative Material

Mapping

Contextual plans have been produced using Ordnance Survey OS 25k raster and OS VectorMap Local 10k.

More detailed site plans have been produced using OS Mastermap (1:1250).

Photography

Photographs used to illustrate the selected viewpoints are taken using a digital camera. These photographs are considered to represent the field of

view experienced in the field and will be used consistently throughout the document.

Photographs within this report should be used as a reference and are provided to assist the reader in conveying the location and nature of views. Photography should not be relied upon and should not be a substitute for visiting the location in the field.

Visual Envelope

An approximate visual envelope has been established from a desk study of topography and a site survey of publicly accessible locations within the study area. This method is considered to be a more effective means of defining actual visibility of the site than digital bare earth modelling. Bare earth modelling has the limitation of not featuring buildings, vegetation or other boundaries which may have a significant effect on the visibility of a development.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2023)

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Regarding landscape and green infrastructure, the Natural Environment section of the NPPF provides a policy context for the countryside and green infrastructure. The key objectives include protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and, minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures. Key paragraphs are:

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

- (a) 'protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)'
- (b) 'recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland"

Paragraph 188 states: "Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries."

Paragraph 189 advises: "Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas"

The Site is located within a landscape that is not designated and has no special protected status, nor is it part of the setting of any nationally designated landscape. This report assesses the character of the Site and its immediate surroundings to aid in decisions related to "the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside." It also considers the potential to improve green infrastructure networks.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

The PPG was first published on 6th March 2014 and is a regularly updated online planning resource which provides guidance on the NPPF and the planning system. The NPPF continues to be the primary document for decision making.

Local Planning Policy

Barnsley Local Plan

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making.

The Local Plan was adopted in January 2019 and is also now accompanied by seven masterplan frameworks which apply to the largest site allocations (housing, employment and mixed-use sites). In addition, the Council has adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans which provide supporting guidance and specific local policies and are a material consideration in the decision-making process.

The Local Plan review was approved at the full Council meeting held 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering its objectives. This means no updates to the Local Plan, in whole or in part, are to be carried out ahead of a further review.

The next review is due to take place in 2027 or earlier if circumstances, require it.

The site is Land Safeguarded for Development, Site Reference: SL19 within Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council's Local Plan. Paragraph 85 of the NPPF advises that when defining Green Belt boundaries, local planning authorities should where necessary, identify in their plans areas of 'safeguarded land' between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period. The aim of protecting this land is to make sure that the Green Belt boundaries will remain in the long term avoiding the need to review them at the end of the plan period.

The following Local Plan policies are relevant to this application proposal:

Policy SD1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development
 Policy SD2: General Development
 Policy H1: The number of new houses to be built
 Policy H2: The distribution of new homes
 Policy H6: Housing Mix and Efficient Use of Land
 Policy H7: Affordable Housing
 Policy T3: New Development and Sustainable Travel
 Policy T4: New Development and Transport Safety
 Policy D1: High Quality Design and Place Making
 Policy CC1: Climate Change
 Policy CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
 Policy POLL1: Pollution Control and Protection
 Policy I1: Infrastructure and Planning Obligations
 Policy BIO1: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 Policy I2: Educational and Community Facilities
 Policy G11: Green Infrastructure

Policy GB1: Protection of Green Belt
 Policy GB6: Safeguarded Land

Supplementary Planning Documents

The Council have adopted SPDs to provide further guidance about the implementation of specific planning policies in the Local Plan. The adopted SPDs should be treated as material considerations in decision-making and are afforded full weight. The following SPDs are relevant to this proposal:

Design of Housing Developments, July 2023
 Residential Amenity and the Siting of Buildings, May 2019
 Open Space provision on new housing developments, May 2019
 Affordable Housing, July 2022
 Biodiversity and Geodiversity, May 2019
 Planning Obligations, November 2019
 Sustainable Travel, July 2022
 Section 278 Agreements, November 2019
 Section 38 Agreements, November 2019
 Parking, November 2019
 Sustainable construction and climate change, July 2023

Landscape Designations

The site and surrounding area is not subject to any regional or national landscape designations.

There are designations identified by the Local Plan in proximity to the site. These are:

Green Belt

The site falls completely within existing settlement limits. The southern boundary of the site is the Green Belt boundary. Land further west of the application site is designated as Green Belt, to be kept free from development.

Netherwood Country Park

A large area of open space consisting predominantly of woodland with open glades for informal recreation. Located to the south and west of the site, approximately 200m away.

Greenspace

There are various areas of formal and informal greenspace within Darfield, including playspaces, allotments and sports fields.

Greenways

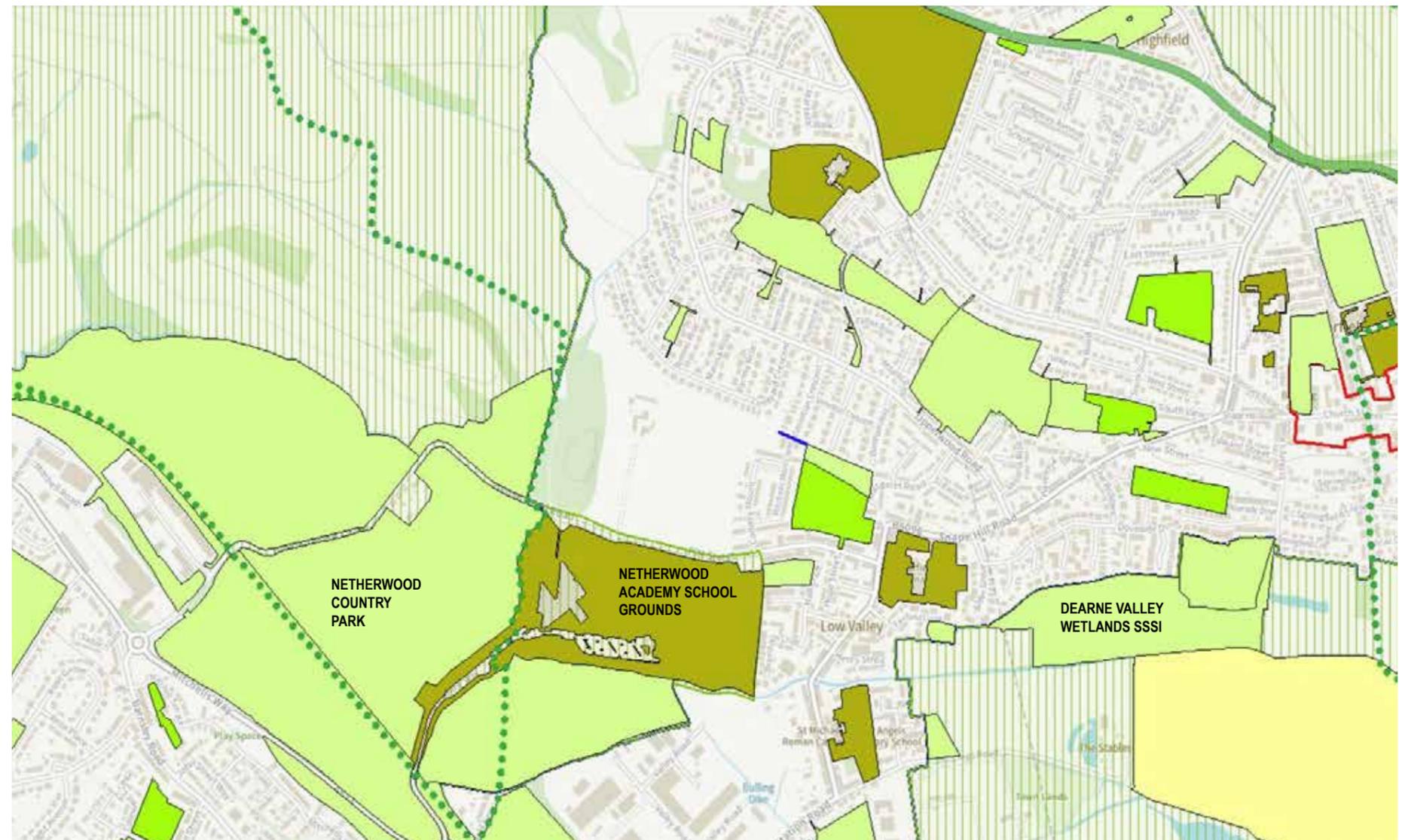
The bridleway which extends to the west of the site is designated as a Greenway and is identified as Trans Penine Trail to Northern & Barnsley routes (Littlefield Lane Wombwell to Doncaster Road A635 Ardsley). In the valley bottom south west of the site lies the Trans Penine Trail Elsecar Greenway from Wombwell to Barnsley & TPT North-Stairfoot roundabout.

SSSI's

There are a number of areas to the north and east of Darfield which together form the Dearne Valley Wetlands SSSI. The closest of these areas is approximately 700m east from the site and is separated by the built up area.

Heritage Assets

There are no designated Heritage Assets within 750m of the site.



Local Plan extract showing the site in relation to the Green Belt, Greenspaces and Green Way

Landscape Character

National Landscape Character

National Character Area (NCA) profiles have been prepared by Natural England for the 159 NCAs defined across England. These NCA profiles include a description of the natural and cultural features that shape the landscape, how the landscape has changed over time, the current key drivers for ongoing change, and a broad analysis of each area's characteristics. The plan below illustrates the NCAs and other defined character areas within the context of the site.

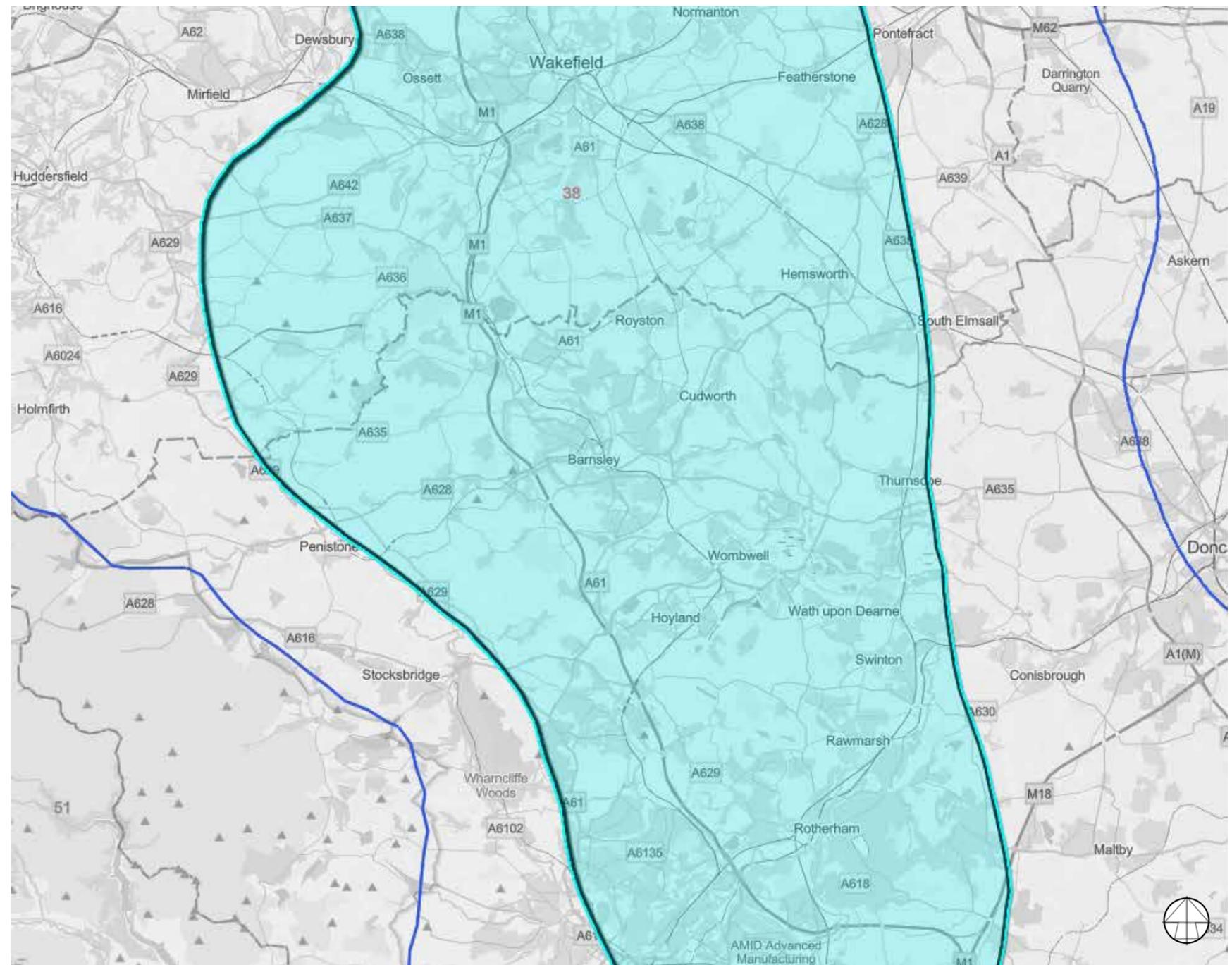
At this very broad landscape scale, the site lies within National Character Area: 38 - Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield.

Summary Description:

The Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield is an area that has seen great change over the past few centuries. Deposits of coal and iron, along with the water supply, brought large scale industry to the area. The impact on the landscape and settlement pattern is clear. So too is the influence on the visual and ecological landscape.

It is a generally low-lying area, with hills and escarpments above wide valleys. The landscape embraces major industrial towns and cities as well as villages and countryside. Over half of the NCA (64 per cent) is green belt, maintaining distinction between settlements. Green belt areas are often under pressure for development and changes in land use.

Very little of the NCA is designated for geology or nature conservation. However, the landscape is dotted with many pockets of habitat where species find refuge. This is often on land that was once worked for minerals or occupied by major industry. Where these land uses once dominated, there are now options to create new landscapes. Links to past use will continue to provide a strong sense of place for local people.



Plan showing extent of NCA38

Landscape Character

Local Landscape Character

Barnsley Landscape Character Assessment 2002

The 2002 Landscape Character Assessment was robustly prepared in accordance with the accepted method promoted by the Countryside Agency at the time and followed on from the Countryside Agency's national review which identified 159 character areas across the country, three of which cross into Barnsley.

Barnsley Landscape Character Assessment Review 2016

A review was carried out in 2016 to ascertain whether changes made to the landscape since 2002 have materially altered the findings of the study in respect the landscape types and their respective landscape condition, strength of character, sensitivity and landscape capacity. Following the desk study and field review into the 24 character areas is considered that strength of character and landscape condition are largely as they were. There are areas where condition and strength of character has weakened but not to the extent that a different score is warranted and there are also character areas where weakening in some parts of the area has been offset but strengthening in others. This is principally as a result of the establishment of the restoration schemes on former colliery sites. 13.2 Given the lack of change in respect of landscape condition and strength of character, overall conclusions in respect of landscape capacity and sensitivity in each of the character areas are unchanged.

The application site falls within Character Type D 'Settled Arable Slopes' which is summarised below:

The Settled Arable Slopes landscape type is largely characterised by its landform and land use patterns. The landform varies from stronger undulations to areas of gentle, even slopes with the latter particularly evident at lowland elevations close to the adjacent river valleys, and at higher elevations on the broader ridge tops. Land use activity is largely characterised by large scale arable farming and residential settlement. There are significant tracts of relatively intact arable farmland but many areas on the urban-rural interface exhibit signs of landscape decline. Settlements are typically former colliery villages or towns and are predominantly residential although recent light industrial estates are a feature. The settlements indicate the area's heavy industrial past, further emphasised by the presence of disused spoil heaps, workings, and railway lines found across the landscape. Field boundaries or divisions are inconsistent varying from stonewalls, and short flailed and overgrown hedgerows, to post and rail fencing or none at all. Low tree cover results in a sense of exposure. The dominance of infrastructure and built development, commonly located on ridge or hilltops, but often spreading down valley sides, compound a striking sense of urbanisation across much of the landscape.

The Character Area is subdivided further with D3 West Dearne Settled Arable Slopes' including the application site, summarised as follows:

- *Rolling landform consisting of broad rounded ridge that gently slopes towards the Rivers Dove and Dearne.*
- *Land use mainly agriculture and residential but with some commercial, industrial, communication and landscape renewal.*
- *Tracts of arable farmland with some short term ley and horse grazing.*
- *Degraded hedgerow field boundaries and some post and wire fencing.*
- *Scattered stone farmsteads, some with modern outbuildings.*
- *Untidy areas adjacent to farmsteads with scrap machinery, farm waste and horse grazing.*
- *Traditional mining settlements within to the character area – Ardsley, Darfield.*
- *Intact farmland up to urban edge in many locations.*
- *Stone walls and infrequently managed hedgerows form boundaries between roads and farmland.*
- *Small infrequent blocks of deciduous trees on valley slopes, but few mature trees on the more exposed higher ground.*
- *Views beyond character area boundaries to settlements, reclaimed tips, working warehouse units and upland part of the Borough.*

Agriculture is predominantly arable with occasional fields of short term ley. It is contained within a network of medium to large geometric fields. Field boundaries consist of hedgerows that are gappy and infrequently managed in places, and post and wire fences. There is a strong sense that the arable land is intensively worked; made apparent by the continued neglect of field boundaries. Farmsteads are scattered throughout the rural parts of the landscape character area. Many have old stone buildings in various states of disrepair and some of these are currently undergoing renovation. Incongruous modern farm outbuildings and untidy areas of farm rubbish are often found next to these stone buildings.

The two large settlements found in this area sit either on the broad ridge top (Ardsley) or on the slopes from the ridge top down to the valley floor (Darfield) and so are visible from much of the character area, and from adjacent character areas. Built development on the settlement edges consists of a mixture of late 20th Century brick housing in a variety of styles and colours.

Large 20th Century warehouse style industrial or commercial buildings are found bordering the A633 at Stairfoot. These are mostly hidden from view by a depression in the landform, corresponding to a tributary of the River Dove. There is a small, reclaimed spoil heap adjacent to the Dove valley floor to the west of Darfield that has small areas of planted trees. There is a small working quarry immediately to the south of the settlement of Ardsley.

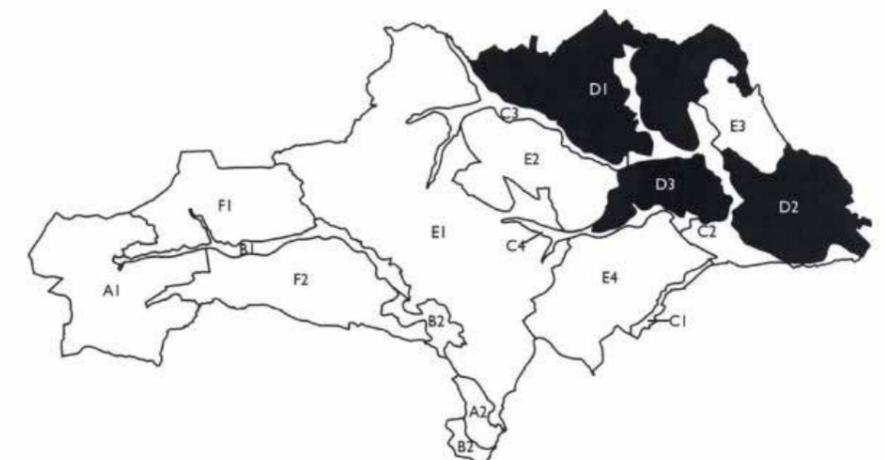
Two main roads cross the character area. The A635 runs between the

settlements of Ardsley and Darfield along the top of the broad ridge. The A633 between Wombwell and Barnsley sits in a small valley and is mostly bounded by built development, so has a minimal impact on the open landscape. Road margins often consist of infrequently managed or fragmented hedgerows and degraded stone walls. A limited number of minor roads are found in this character area, most of them providing access to farmsteads. The railway line from Barnsley to Sheffield crosses the western extreme of the character area.

The assessment concludes the following:

The overall the strength of character is judged to be moderate. The landscape condition is considered to be poor. In view of the above, landscape sensitivity to further built development is judged to be medium and landscape capacity is considered to be low

D: SETTLED ARABLE SLOPES



Appraisal of Effects on Landscape Character

The development proposals have been used to determine the effects on baseline landscape character. The magnitude of change brought about by the proposed development is considered for the following character areas:

Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Nature of Effects
NCA 38 Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield.	Medium	Low	Adverse
D3 West Dearne Settled Arable Slopes	Medium	Medium	Adverse

The landscape character of the site is considered to be of medium sensitivity for all receptors. This is reflective of the sensitivity descriptions within the character assessments.

The capacity of the site to accommodate change is considered to be medium, as a result of partial loss of or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the landscape character. Introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not necessarily be considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.

The nature of effects is considered to be adverse. Any development of the site should therefore look to minimise impact on the landscape character by conserving the defined characteristics of the area and following the Guidelines stated within the LCAs.

Landscape Elements

Landscape Elements are physical components of the landscape such as landform, trees, hedgerows, and watercourses.

1. Low Valley Farm

Complex of farmhouse, stables, barns and yards. The majority of buildings are derelict or under used with some in disrepair.

2. Woodland

Block of woodland to the west of the site, consisting primarily of Willow, Alder, Sycamore and Poplar species. Significant height of approximately 20m.

Boundary Hedges

3. Native hawthorn hedgerows to sides of existing farm access track.

4. Native hawthorn hedgerows partially enclosing paddock.

5. Native hawthorn hedgerow to Pitt Street, the southern boundary of the site.

6. Surface water attenuation basin (dry) serving the recently completed Barratt development.

7. Belt of trees forming the site boundary to the west of Low Valley Farm. Varying height and mix of species, including Hawthorn, Sycamore and Willow.

8. Northern boundary trees and scrub.

Self seeded scrub vegetation along parts of the site's northern boundary against domestic gardens.

9. Netherwood Academy Grounds

10. Public Open Space and play area, Barratt development.

11. Grazing paddocks divided by wire fences.



Landscape Elements

Landform

Wider Context

The site lies close to the base of the valley of the River Dove. In the vicinity of the site, the river flows south of the school grounds at a height of approximately 30m.

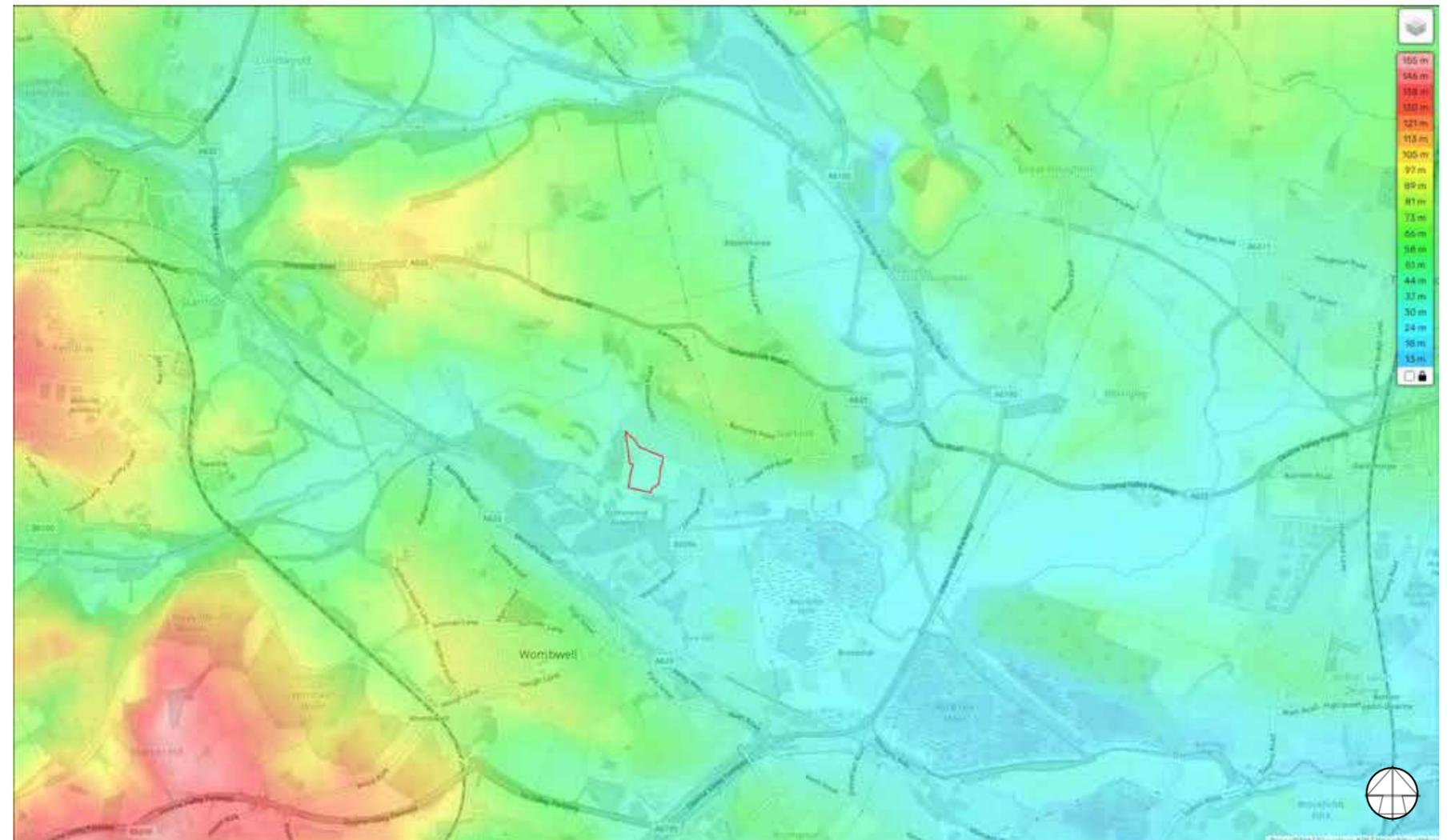
To the north west the highest point on the valley watershed is Lees Hill at 105m. To the southern side of the valley the highest point is Blacker Hill at 154m. The sides of the valley are gently sloping.

East of the site the River Dove has a confluence with the larger River Dearne which flows from the north.

Two man made former spoil heaps have been restored to the west of the site in the base of the valley. These features rise up from the floor of the valley at 30m to approximately 60m. They now appear as naturalistic features within the landscape, having a combination of fields used for grazing and semi-mature woodland.

The Site

The site falls slightly southwards towards the Pitt Street boundary. The highest point of the site is in the vicinity of Low Valley Farm at 38m, in the northern part of the site. The southeastern corner is the lowest part, at 30m. The fall across the site is an event gradient of 1:33. The site also falls slightly towards the far northwestern corner at 35m.



Landscape Elements

Appraisal of Effects on Landscape Elements

The Landscape Strategy has been used to determine the effects on baseline landscape elements. The magnitude of change brought about by the proposed development is considered for the following elements of the landscape:

Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Nature of Effects
Topsoil	Medium	High	Adverse
Site Vegetation	Medium	Medium	Beneficial
Landform	Medium	Negligible	Adverse

The top soil of the site is considered to be of medium sensitivity. This is due to the current agricultural use. The proposed development will replace large areas of topsoil with hard surfacing. Other areas will be landscaped to create areas of open space with extensive tree and hedge planting, this is judged to result in a high magnitude of change with a adverse effect.

The site vegetation is considered to be of medium sensitivity. The proposals will retain the majority of boundary vegetation and in addition will provide extensive new hedgerows. Some internal hedgrows will be lost. New buffer planting will be carried out to all boundaries. This will result in a medium magnitude of change with a beneficial effect.

Landform is considered to be of medium sensitivity. Some minor changes in levels are expected to create level plots for dwellings, in addition a surface water attenuation basin will be created. The magnitude of change in landform will be negligible with an adverse effect.



View of Low Valley Farm with the tree belt to the west



View showing 'Paddock Hedgerow'



Existing woodland to the west of the site showing height of approximately 20m



Hawthorn hedge to Pitt Street

Visual Appraisal

This part of the study considers the visual attributes of the site and its surroundings. Available views of the site are identified and understood by analysis of the following:

- Identification of sensitive visual receptors
- Identification of visual barriers
- Determining an approximate visual envelope
- Identification and analysis of representative viewpoints

Visual Barriers

Survey of the study area has demonstrated that there are a number of features which prevent wider views of the site. In order to understand the extent of the visual envelope for the development site it is first necessary to consider features which prevent views. Visual barriers have been grouped into the following categories:

Built Form

The north and east of the site is bounded by built form, generally of 1 and 2 storeys. The proximity of these buildings to the site means that they effectively screen the site to some views to the north and east.

Vegetation

There are significant areas of woodland within the vicinity, as highlighted on the adjacent plan. Some of these areas are close to the site and have a screening effect on views, particularly to the south and west.

Landform

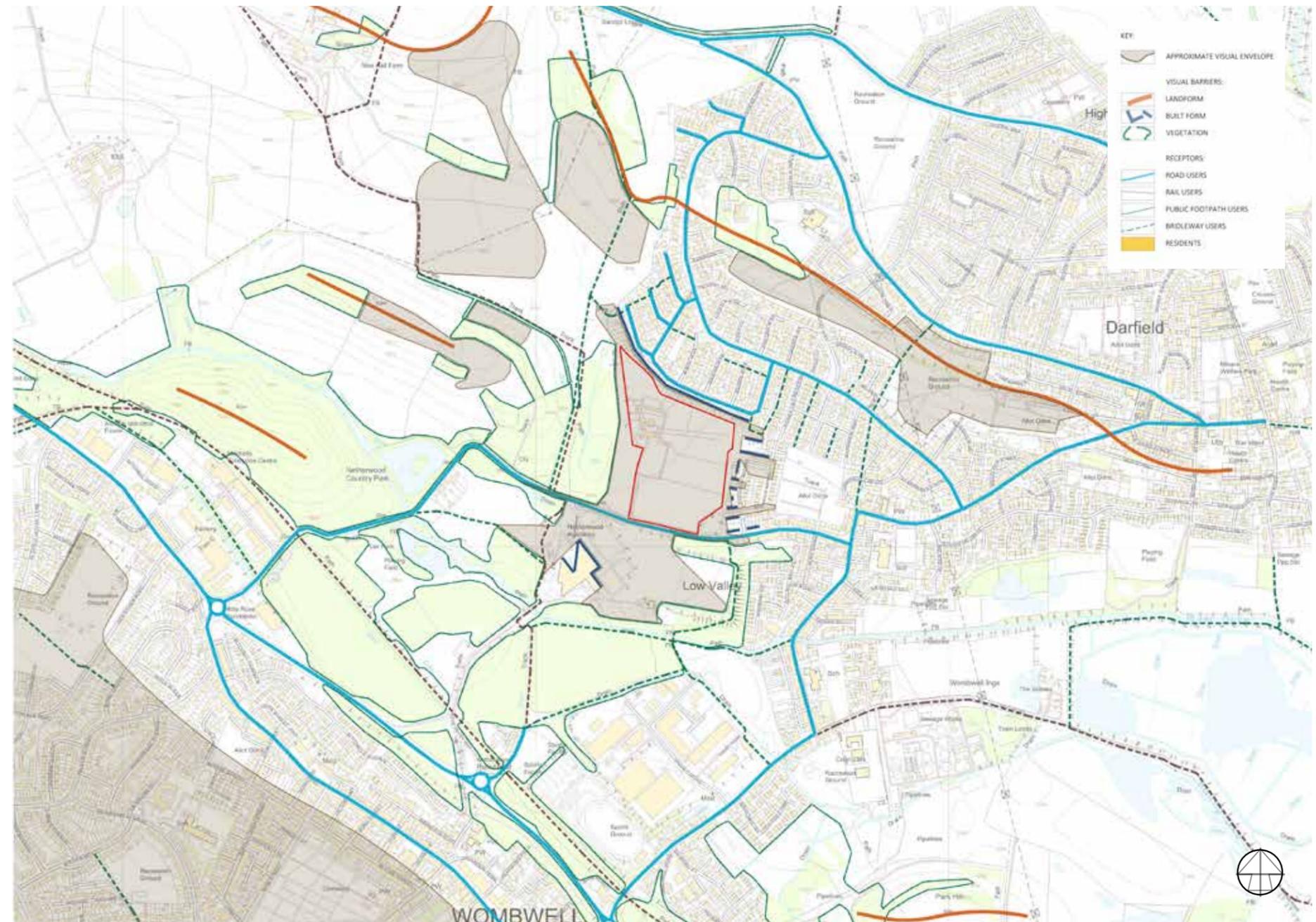
The gently sloping landform means that relatively small visual barriers as identified above can have a significant effect on views. The ridge forms to the north and west of the site are sufficient to screen many more distant views.

Sensitive Visual Receptors

The plan opposite shows sensitive visual receptors that could be impacted by the development. Receptor is a term used to describe a physical feature or viewer group in visual terms. Identification of receptors builds on the establishment of the visual envelope. Receptors include users of roads, footpaths and residential properties.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

An approximate visual envelope has been established from a desk study of topography and a site survey of publicly accessible locations within the study area. This method is considered to be an effective means of defining actual visibility of the site taking into account the barriers described above.

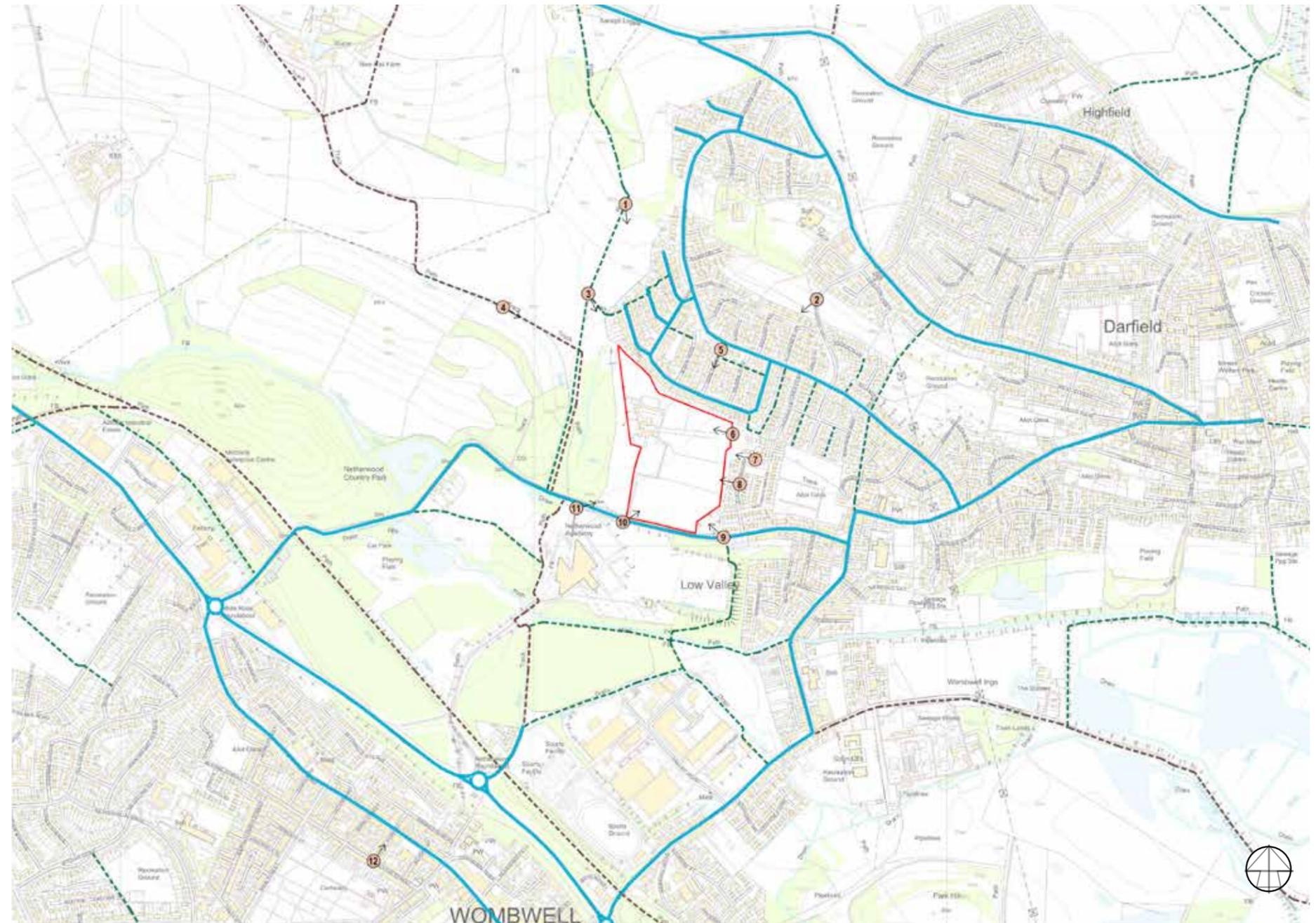


Not to scale

Representative Viewpoints

A series of 12 representative viewpoints have been selected as being the most representative of sensitive receptors based on the visual analysis, other views have been discounted because they are very similar and duplicate the same issues. The viewpoint locations are shown on the plan opposite.

Photographs shown were taken on a site visit in May 2025 in clear, sunny conditions, using a digital camera. All photographs are taken at 1.5m above ground level. Photographs within this report should be used as a reference and are provided to assist the reader in conveying the location and nature of views. Photography should not be relied upon and should not be a substitute for visiting the location in the field.



Not to scale

Viewpoint 1

Representative Viewpoint 1	
View From	Public Footpath
Distance to nearest part of the site	360m
General description	View from public footpath looking south. View of site seen to the left of the woodland and beyond the residential properties in the middle ground. The proposed dwellings will be seen in the context of the existing residential and will be contained on the rights of the view by the existing woodland.
Receptor	Pedestrians
Sensitivity	High
Magnitude of Change	Low
Nature of Change	Adverse
Opportunities for Mitigation	Buffer tree planting to the northern tip of the site. Tree planting within the development to break up views of built form.



Viewpoint 2

Representative Viewpoint 2	
View From	Roundwood Way
Distance to nearest part of the site	355m
General description	View from Roundwood Way looking south over the existing residential area to the site. This view is also representative of similar views available from the open space areas located to either side of the road and associated footpaths within them. There is a long distance view from this elevated position which extends to the south side of the valley and Wombwell. The site sits between existing residential and the Netherwood Academy. The middle ground of the view has significant areas of woodland around Netherwood Country Park, the Trans Pennine Trail and the River Dove.
Receptor	Pedestrians, road users and users of adjacent open space areas
Sensitivity	Vehicles - Medium. Pedestrians and open space users - High
Magnitude of Change	Medium
Nature of Change	Adverse
Opportunities for Mitigation	Buffer tree planting to the northern tip of the site. Tree planting within the development to break up views of built form. Open space areas to break up the mass of residential.



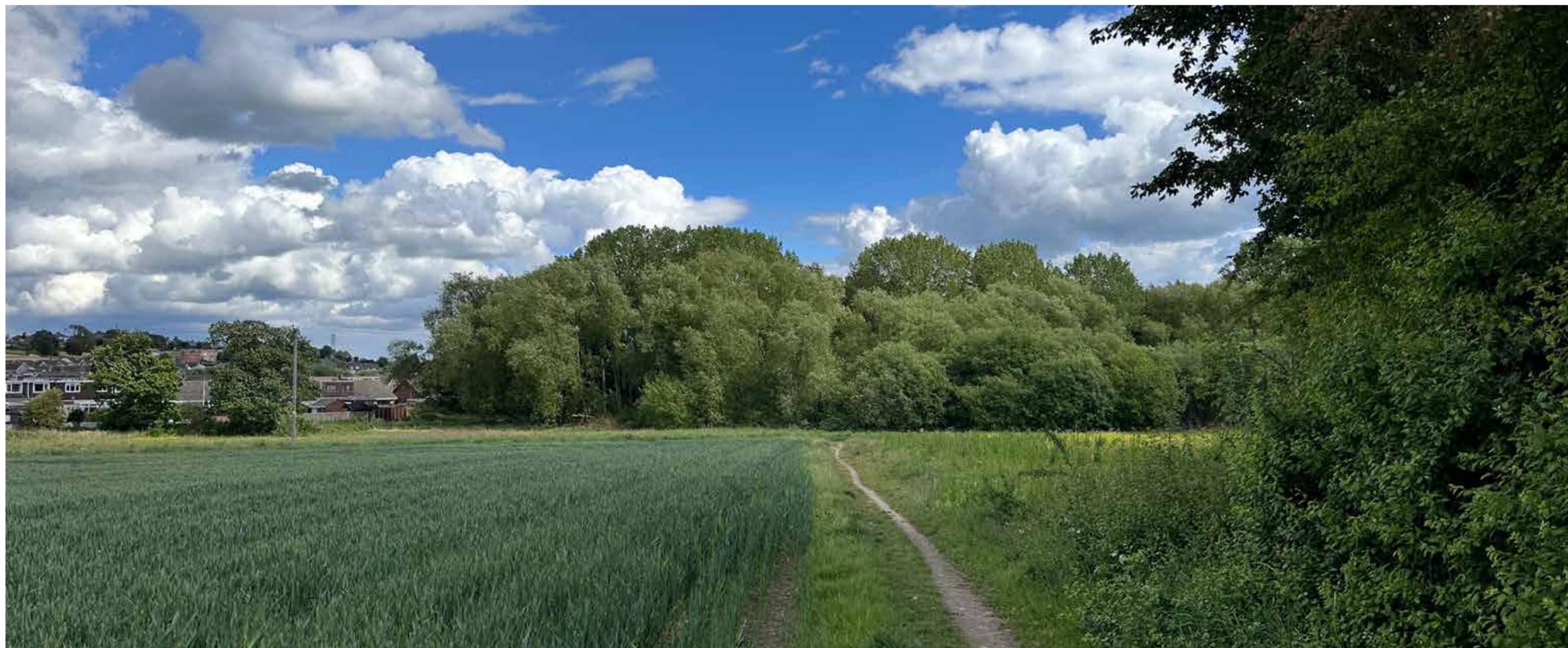
Viewpoint 3

Representative Viewpoint 3	
View From	Public Footpath (no. 42)
Distance to nearest part of the site	110m
General description	View from public footpath looking south east. The northern tip of the site is in the centre of the view partially screened by the woodland belt and the rear gardens of bungalows. Dwellings may be visible set behind the woodland, they will be seen in context with the existing dwellings on the left.
Receptor	Pedestrians
Sensitivity	High
Magnitude of Change	Low
Nature of Change	Adverse
Opportunities for Mitigation	Buffer tree planting to the northern tip of the site. Tree planting within the development to break up views of built form.



Viewpoint 4

Representative Viewpoint 4	
View From	Bridleway (no. 5)
Distance to nearest part of the site	170m
General description	View from bridleway looking east. The northern part of the site is in the centre of the view screened by the woodland belt. It's unlikely that the development will be visible due to the woodland belt. Glimpsed views may be possible in the winter through the trees without leaves, they will be seen in context with the existing dwellings on the left.
Receptor	Bridleway users
Sensitivity	High
Magnitude of Change	Low
Nature of Change	Adverse
Opportunities for Mitigation	Buffer tree planting to the northern tip of the site. Tree planting within the development to break up views of built form.



Viewpoint 5

Representative Viewpoint 5	
View From	Marina Rise
Distance to nearest part of the site	140m
General description	View from Marina Rise. The site is partially visible through the gaps between bungalows at the end of the road, in the centre of the view. The height of the existing bungalows will provide partial screening of proposed dwellings within the site. New dwellings will be seen in context with the existing dwellings. Some of the longer views to the south of the valley may be screened by development.
Receptor	Pedestrians and road users.
Sensitivity	Vehicles - Medium. Walkers - Medium
Magnitude of Change	Low
Nature of Change	Adverse
Opportunities for Mitigation	Retain existing trees on the northern boundary of the site where present. Planting of new trees within development to break-up the roofscape.



Viewpoint 6

Representative Viewpoint 6	
View From	Non-definitive footpath to the eastern boundary of the site.
Distance to nearest part of the site	0m
General description	View from footpath looking west. View is over the existing paddocks towards Low Valley Farm with the woodland belt beyond. Scrub and trees on the northern boundary are visible to the right of the view. The proposed development will see the paddocks replaced by residential development.
Receptor	Pedestrians
Sensitivity	Medium (non-definitive route)
Magnitude of Change	High
Nature of Change	Adverse
Opportunities for Mitigation	A corridor of open space should be provided to safeguard the walking route and provide a green setting for users. Dwellings should be set back from the route and should be oriented to look onto it, providing surveillance for safety.



Viewpoint 7

Representative Viewpoint 7	
View From	Mitchells Main Close
Distance to nearest part of the site	65m
General description	View from Mitchells Main Close and public open space/play area, looking west towards the site. The existing paddocks are visible along with Low Valley Farm and the woodland belt beyond.
Receptor	Pedestrians and road users
Sensitivity	Vehicles - Medium. Pedestrians - Medium
Magnitude of Change	Medium
Nature of Change	Adverse
Opportunities for Mitigation	A buffer of open space should be provided to safeguard the walking route between the two residential areas. Dwellings should be set back from the route and should be oriented to look onto it, providing surveillance for safety.



Viewpoint 8

Representative Viewpoint 8	
View From	Colliery Mount
Distance to nearest part of the site	40m
General description	View from Colliery Mount looking west along a private shared drive towards the site. View is over the existing paddocks towards the woodland belt beyond. The proposed development will see the paddocks replaced by residential development.
Receptor	Pedestrians and road users
Sensitivity	Vehicles - Medium. Pedestrians - Medium
Magnitude of Change	Medium
Nature of Change	Adverse
Opportunities for Mitigation	A buffer of open space should be provided to safeguard the walking route between the two residential areas. Dwellings should be set back from the route and should be oriented to look onto it, providing surveillance for safety.



Viewpoint 9

Representative Viewpoint 9	
View From	Pitt Street
Distance to nearest part of the site	70m
General description	View from south side of Pitt Street looking across the surface water attenuation basin constructed for the Barratt scheme to the site boundary, demarked by a timber post and rail fence. Low Valley Farm can be seen in the background with the woodland belt beyond. Residential development will be visible in the middle ground, with open space and basin in the foreground
Receptor	Vehicles and Pedestrians
Sensitivity	Vehicles - Medium. Pedestrians - Medium
Magnitude of Change	Medium
Nature of Change	Adverse
Opportunities for Mitigation	Buffer to be created to the edge of development parcel with tree planting to soften the built form. Positioning the surface water attenuation area in this part of the site will further reduce the impact of development from this view.



Viewpoint 10

Representative Viewpoint 10	
View From	Pitt Street, at the eastern end of the Netherwood Academy drop-off area.
Distance to nearest part of the site	20m
General description	View to the south western corner of the site where the existing farm access is located. The hedge to Pitt Street is visible in the centre of the view with the paddocks beyond. The residential area around Upperwood Road is visible in the background along with the new Barratt development.
Receptor	Vehicles and Pedestrians
Sensitivity	Vehicles - Medium. Pedestrians - Medium
Magnitude of Change	High
Nature of Change	Adverse
Opportunities for Mitigation	Existing hedge to be retained to Pitt Street and supplemented with hedgerow tree planting to the inside of the site. Development to be set back from the boundary to provide a buffer of open space and reduce the impact of built form. Dwellings to face Pitt Street to overlook the public realm and provide an active frontage.



Viewpoint 11

Representative Viewpoint 11	
View From	Pitt Street, Netherwood Academy entrance
Distance to nearest part of the site	120m
General description	View from the Academy entrance looking east. The site does not directly front this section of Pitt Street but the eastern extent of the development may be visible above the existing hedge at a distance of approximately 120m.
Receptor	Vehicles and Pedestrians
Sensitivity	Vehicles Medium, Pedestrians - Medium
Magnitude of Change	Low
Nature of Change	Adverse
Opportunities for Mitigation	Existing hedge to the western boundary and supplemented with hedgerow tree planting to the inside of the site. Development to be set back from the western boundary to provide a buffer of open space and reduce the impact of built form. Dwellings to face the boundary to overlook the public realm.



Viewpoint 12

Representative Viewpoint 12	
View From	York Street, Wombwell
Distance to nearest part of the site	1040m
General description	Long range view from York Street on the southern side of the valley towards the site. This view is representative of similar views which may be available from the built up area of Wombwell at a height sufficient to see over the woodland areas in the base of the valley, this would equate to a height of approximately 50m above sea level. Netherwood Academy, a large 3 storey building is partially screened by the woodland in the centre of the view. The ground level of the site is not clearly visible from this view and range, however buildings within the site may be visible. Any visible buildings will be seen positioned beyond the large Academy building and with the existing residential of Upperwood Road beyond.
Receptor	Vehicles and Pedestrians
Sensitivity	Vehicles - Medium, Pedestrians - Medium
Magnitude of Change	Negligible
Nature of Change	Adverse
Opportunities for Mitigation	Buffer tree planting to the southern boundary. Tree planting within the development to break up views of built form.



Appraisal of Effects on Visual Amenity

Visual Envelope

Within the study area the visual envelope of the site is restricted primarily to the areas identified. Theoretical views of the development are possible for an area extending at least 1km. Sensitive receptors within the visual envelope are generally limited to residential properties, roads and public rights of way and open spaces.

Using a series of 12 representative viewpoints the visual effects of the proposed development have been appraised. The table below shows a summary of the visual effects.

Visual	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Nature of Effects
1	High	Low	Adverse
2	Medium/High	Medium	Adverse
3	High	Low	Adverse
4	High	Low	Adverse
5	Medium	Low	Adverse
6	Medium	High	Adverse
7	Medium	Medium	Adverse
8	Medium	Medium	Adverse
9	Medium	Medium	Adverse
10	Medium	High	Adverse
11	Medium	Low	Adverse
12	Medium	Negligible	Adverse

All viewpoint receptors are considered to be medium or high sensitivity. This is due to the edge of settlement location and the fact that many views are either from residential or footpaths/bridleways.

The magnitude of change is Medium or lower for 10 of the viewpoints, this is due to the screening effect of existing woodlands and built form, and the site being seen in the context of existing residential development. The viewpoints seeing a High magnitude of change are the 2 views which are directly from the site boundary.

The nature of effects is considered to be adverse in all cases.

Landscape Character

The development proposals have been used to determine the effects on baseline landscape character. The magnitude of change brought about by the proposed development is considered for the following character areas:

Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Nature of Effects
NCA 38 Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield.	Medium	Low	Adverse
D3 West Dearne Settled Arable Slopes	Medium	Medium	Adverse

The landscape character of the site is considered to be of medium sensitivity for all receptors. This is reflective of the sensitivity descriptions within the character assessments.

The capacity of the site to accommodate change is considered to be medium, as a result of partial loss of or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the landscape character. Introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not necessarily be considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.

The nature of effects is considered to be adverse. Any development of the site should therefore look to minimise impact on the landscape character by conserving the defined characteristics of the area and following the Guidelines stated within the LCAs.

The effects on Landscape Character will have been considered through the Local Plan process which lead to the allocation of the land for housing.

Landscape Elements

The Landscape Masterplan has been used to determine the effects on baseline landscape elements. The magnitude of change brought about by the proposed development is considered for the following elements of the landscape:

Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Nature of Effects
Topsoil	Medium	High	Adverse
Site Boundary Vegetation	Medium	Medium	Beneficial
Landform	Medium	Negligible	Adverse

The top soil of the site is considered to be of medium sensitivity. This is due to the current agricultural use. The proposed development will replace large areas of topsoil with hard surfacing. Other areas will be landscaped to create areas of open space with extensive tree and hedge planting, this is judged to result in a high magnitude of change with a adverse effect.

The site boundary vegetation is considered to be of medium sensitivity. The proposals will retain the majority of boundary vegetation and in addition will restore some hedgerows. New hedge and buffer planting will be carried out to the southern and northern boundaries. This will result in a medium magnitude of change with a beneficial effect.

Landform is considered to be of medium sensitivity. Some minor changes in levels are expected to create level plots for dwellings, in addition a small surface water attenuation basin will be created. The magnitude of change in landform will be negligible with an adverse effect.

Visual Appraisal

Within the study area the visual envelope of the site is restricted primarily to the areas identified. Theoretical views of the development are possible for an area extending at least 1km. Sensitive receptors within the visual envelope are generally limited to residential properties, roads and public rights of way and open spaces.

Using a series of 12 representative viewpoints the visual effects of the proposed development have been appraised. The table below shows a summary of the visual effects.

Visual	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Nature of Effects
1	High	Low	Adverse
2	Medium/High	Medium	Adverse
3	High	Low	Adverse
4	High	Low	Adverse
5	Medium	Low	Adverse
6	Medium	High	Adverse
7	Medium	Medium	Adverse
8	Medium	Medium	Adverse
9	Medium	Medium	Adverse
10	Medium	High	Adverse
11	Medium	Low	Adverse
12	Medium	Negligible	Adverse

All viewpoint receptors are considered to be medium or high sensitivity. This is due to the edge of settlement location and the fact that many views are either from residential or footpaths/bridleways.

The magnitude of change is Medium or lower for 10 of the viewpoints, this is due to the screening effect of existing woodlands and built form, and the site being seen in the context of existing residential development. The viewpoints seeing a High magnitude of change are the 2 views which are directly from the site boundary.

The nature of effects is considered to be adverse in all cases.

The appraisal of effects has shown that the proposed development will result in effects which are adverse in nature. This is due in many cases to the greenfield nature of the site at the close proximity to receptors such as existing residential and footpaths.

The site is within the settlement limits and is visually contained by existing residential on the north and eastern sides, woodland on the western side and Netherwood Academy and woodland on the southern side.

As with any development of this scale and form there are inevitable adverse effects, these are visual effects close to the site boundary. However these have been limited through design and offset by improvements/increases in vegetation, public open space and access.

A Landscape Strategy illustrating mitigation measures has been prepared for the development which will guide the more detailed landscape proposals ensuring the following:

- A scheme which assimilates into the local landscape character
- The establishment of an improved settlement edge
- Retention and management of existing boundary hedges and trees
- Areas of open space for recreation and improved public access
- New planting to all boundaries
- Adverse effects of development which are mitigated as far as is reasonably practical

Given the approach taken to the scheme design and the resulting proposals which accord with local planning policies and current best practice in Green Infrastructure design and planning; there is no reason why the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed development should be regarded as unacceptable on this site.