

# HALIFAX ROAD, PENISTONE: LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL OF A POTENTIAL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Prepared for: **Barratt David Wilson Homes**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

SLR Consulting Ltd (SLR) was instructed by Barratt David Wilson Homes (West Yorkshire) Ltd, (BDW) to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) of a proposed new residential development site to the south of Halifax Road, Penistone.

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

- To identify the landscape character of the site and its context, as well as the nature of views towards and from the site, in order to inform the design of the masterplan;
- To assess the potential landscape and visual effects which would be likely to occur if the proposed development were to take place.

BDW initially applied for full planning permission based upon an initial planning layout. Following feedback from the Barnsley Urban Design Review Panel, and from SLR's landscape team, the initial planning layout was then revised. Further details of this design process are included at section 3.0 of this report.

BDW is now applying for full permission to develop the site in accordance with the revised masterplan, which is illustrated on drawing 2001.01 prepared by STEN (dated 24.11.20).

### 1.1 Definitions

Landscape, as defined in the European Landscape Convention, is *"an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors"*, (Council of Europe, 2000). Landscape does not apply only to special or designated places, nor is it limited to countryside. Visual effects are the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. Visual receptors are the people whose views may be affected by the proposed development.

### 1.2 Methodology

This report identifies the potential landscape and visual receptors which could be affected by the proposed development, and then assesses the potential level of effects which could occur for these receptors if the development were to take place. In providing this assessment the report does not define whether these effects are likely to be significant or not, since this is not an EIA development. It is for this reason that this report is termed a landscape and visual appraisal (LVA) rather than a landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA).

The terminology and principles of this appraisal are in accordance with the recommendations within the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition, 2013, also known as GLVIA3, produced by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013). A full method statement is included at Appendix A.

The appraisal is based upon a desk top assessment of relevant plans, guidance and character assessments, as well as a thorough site assessment carried out in May 2020.

### 1.3 The Site and Study Area

The application site is defined with a red line on drawing H-01.

The study area includes the wider setting of the settlement. This does not imply that all areas illustrated on this drawing would experience landscape and/or visual effects as a result of the proposed development, but rather that this forms the starting point for understanding the wider setting of the site.

## 2.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

### 2.1 National Policy: The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraph 11 sets out the fundamental principle of this document: that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. All development that is in accordance with the development plan should be approved *“without delay”* and that *“where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date”* permission should be granted for development *“unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.”*

In relation to landscape, the NPPF defines sustainability as including the protection and enhancement of the *“natural, built and historic environment”* (paragraph 8).

Paragraphs 124, 128 and 130 relate to the need for good design in new developments. Paragraph 124 states that *“good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”*. Paragraph 128 states that applicants should work closely *“with those directly affected by their proposals to evolve designs which take account of the views of the community”*. Paragraph 130 states that *“permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions”*.

Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that the planning system, *“should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by [inter alia] ...protecting and enhancing valued landscapes”* and by *“recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside”*. Paragraph 171 states that the planning system should *“distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites”*.

In paragraph 172 it is stated that *“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 landscape and scenic beauty”*.

### 2.2 Designations

Landscape and landscape related designations are set out on drawing H-01.

The site is approximately 5 kilometres to the north east of the Peak District National Park at its closest point, (and is also outside of any Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, AONBs). It is also outside of the Green Belt, which extends to the northern edge of Halifax Road and to the east of existing housing on Well House Lane. There are no landscape-related designations on the site.

The nearest of Penistone's Conservation Areas extends northwards along Bridge Street, and at its closest is approximately 490 metres from the southern edge of the application site.

The nearest listed structures are a grade II milestone on Huddersfield Road, which is separated from the site by existing housing, and another grade II milestone on Barnsley Road, which is again separated from the site by existing housing. Grade I Church of St John is over 740 metres to the south of the southern boundary of the application site.

There are no footpaths or other rights of way across the application site, but there is a network of footpaths in the open countryside to the north and east of the site. The Trans-Pennine Trail (National Cycle Route 62) passes through the centre of Penistone and is approximately 650 metres from the southern edge of the application site at its nearest point.

## 2.3 Development Plan: Barnsley Local Plan

In January 2019 Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC) adopted the Local Plan, which covers the period up to 2033. In the adopted plan the application site is allocated for development of 414 new homes under policy HS75. Land to the west of the application site (Land South of Well House Lane) is also allocated for development of 132 dwellings under policy HS74.

Policy HS 75 states that the development will be expected to (*inter alia*):

- *Provide an appropriate buffer around Westhorpe Works;*
- *Ensure the wider characteristic landscape setting and the setting of the Penistone Conservation Area are protected and enhanced by the use of appropriate site layout and sympathetic design that reflects their setting, scaling, massing, details and materials.*

Policy D1 of the Local Plan states that "*development is expected to be of high quality design and will be expected to respect, take advantage of and reinforce the distinctive, local character and features of Barnsley, including:*

- *Landscape character, topography, green infrastructure assets, important habitats, woodlands and other natural features;*
- *Views and vistas to key buildings, landmarks, skylines and gateways; and*
- *Heritage and townscape character including the scale, layout, building styles and materials of the built form in the locality".*

D1 continues also states that development should contribute to place making and be of high quality.

Policy LC1 states that "*development will be expected to retain and enhance the character and distinctiveness the individual Landscape Character area in which it is located (as set out in the Landscape Character Assessment of Barnsley Borough 2002 and any subsequent amendments)".*

## 2.4 Development Plan: Penistone Neighbourhood Development Plan (2018-2033)

The Penistone Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) was made on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2019.

Section 3.2 of this document sets out the key objectives of the NDP. Of particular relevance to this LVA are the following objectives:

- **Objective 1:** To ensure that the countryside surrounding the town and villages remains accessible and where deficits exist to work towards addressing these;
- **Objective 4:** To maintain the distinctive views that exist across the parish, whether from town looking out, or countryside looking in;

Policy BE1 states that "*where new housing developments are proposed, homes should be reflective of local architecture and in keeping with the surrounding area*". It also notes that there should be no houses above two storeys on the edges of the settlement near to the countryside, and that new developments should use materials that reflect the characteristics of existing housing in the locality. Furthermore, BE1 notes that development proposals should "*respect and maintain*" key views around the town, which are identified within the plan; none of those views which are identified are located on or near to the application site.

Policy CGI 1 states aims to preserve and maintain green corridors which provide links between the town and the countryside. The Scout Dike open space, to the south of the application site, is within one of the strategic corridors identified at Appendix 6.

## 2.5 Barnsley Urban Renaissance Design Advisory Panel (BURDAP)

STEN prepared an earlier draft of the proposed layout (drawing 2001.01), which included 459 dwellings. This was submitted to the Council for review and comment, and on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2020 BURDAP provided a thorough review of the design. Key elements of their report which are of particular relevance to this LVA are as follows:

- The panel felt that the influence of landscape assessment and design was not fully apparent in the draft layout: *“the panel stressed that the role and influence of the landscape architect needs to be more upfront in the early stages of the design and layout, rather than be more visible at the tail-end”*;
- Concern was expressed that this would be perceived as a separate housing estate, rather than part of Penistone: *“the starting point for the layout and design should be Penistone, (‘it’s all about Penistone’) rather than about variations of standard, generic house types”*;
- The gradient of densities across the site was not logical, with low density areas along the spine road;
- The character of the central open space needs to be clearer, and the good example of open spaces of varying sizes at Derwenthorpe in York was noted;
- The design should encourage the use of cycles, particularly given the proximity of the Trans Pennine Trail;
- *“Regarding the treatment of the edge of the development to Halifax Road, the panel stated that it should feel like Penistone is ‘fading into the countryside’”*;
- However it was also noted that Halifax Road needs to feel like it is part of a town: *it’s got to make people want to slow down through built form rather than through signage”*;
- More time needs to be spent considering *“how you encounter Penistone”*.

## 2.6 Summary of Planning Context

The site is entirely outside of national landscape designations, and is also outside of the Green Belt. There are no ecological or heritage designations within or immediately adjacent to the site.

The site is allocated for 414 new homes in the adopted Local Plan. Policy HS75 of the Local Plan requires that the landscape setting of the settlement should be maintained and enhanced.

## 3.0 ASPECTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT WHICH HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO CAUSE LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

The masterplan prepared by STEN Architecture (Drawing 2001.01, 24.11.20) illustrates the proposed layout, the design of which has been guided by the landscape and visual appraisal process.

The initial layout, (also prepared by STEN, Planning Layout 2001.01), which was submitted to BURDAP, included 459 homes with a consistent density across the site, as well as dense development along the southern edge of Halifax Road. Taking on board comments from the first BURDAP design review, and following an initial landscape and visual review by Jeremy Smith of SLR, a further masterplan was then prepared which included the following changes (relevant to this appraisal):

- Reduction in housing numbers from 459 homes to 403 homes;
- Creation of a more varied “crumbly” edge along Halifax Road, with houses at differing distances from the road and some views of new homes framed and filtered by shrub and tree planting;
- Houses fronting Halifax Road to create an active frontage with a more positive sense of arrival;
- Also fronting development along Well House Lane to create a positive interface with existing homes on this road;
- Creation of a green, open gateway on Halifax Road, which helps to ease the transition from countryside to settlement, but which also provides a clear sense of arrival and identity through framed views towards St John’s church in the town centre;
- Provision of a greenway through the site which links with Well House Lane, and which also connects public open spaces (POS) throughout the site;
- Allow further opportunities for long views towards the town centre from points along the greenway, to provide both legibility and identity;
- Creation of a cycle route through the site connecting Halifax Road with Well House Lane;
- A clear gradient of density across the site, with a looser, more open structure adjacent to the countryside and a denser, more urban feel closer to Wellhouse Lane;
- Landscape buffers between proposed and existing houses provided to protect visual amenity of existing residents;
- Appropriate materials would be used throughout the site, with particular focus on the edges along Halifax Road, Well House Lane and the central greenway passing through the site. Marshall’s Cromwell Buff weathered reconstituted stone would be used for the elevations in these areas, with Russell Grampian anthracite roof tiles (or similar approved);
- An overall increase in the area of POS and landscaping overall.

The following attributes of the proposed development are those which are the most likely to result in landscape and visual effects.

### 3.1 Location and Scale

The application site occupies four large pasture fields covering an area of approximately 15 ha, and is wholly within the area allocated for 414 new homes in the adopted Local Plan. As noted in section 2.0 of this report, a further allocation for 132 homes is located to the west of the application site.



The site is surrounded by existing development and infrastructure on all sides: to the north is Halifax Road (A629), with open countryside (Cat Hill, Scout Dike, Gadding Moor) further to the north; To the west is Westhorpe Works, with allocation HS74 further to the west; to the east is existing housing on Well House Lane with open countryside further to the east; and to the south is the Scout Dike open space and housing along Huddersfield Road and Well House Lane.

### 3.2 Height and Density

The development would comprise two storey homes, with a small number of three storey homes at the centre of the site.

The gross density of development on the site would be 26.8 dwellings per hectare (dph), which is a low density highly appropriate for a settlement edge development. As has been noted above, the density of development would increase towards the south and east of the site, to provide a sequential sense of moving towards Penistone.

### 3.3 Access

The access for the development would be onto Halifax Road, which is already a main road. An additional access would be provided from Well House Lane.

### 3.4 Loss of Landscape Elements

The proposed development would result in the loss of pasture fields, although approximately 3.8ha of the site would be retained as open land (in the stand-off to Westhorpe Works) or public open space.

The majority of hedgerows and dry stone walls around the site would be retained, and there are no mature trees or shrubs within the site.

### 3.5 Proposed Mitigation

Approximately 25% of the area of the site would remain free from development, and areas of grassland and new native tree and shrub planting would be established throughout and around the site, providing both landscape and visual enhancement. Particular care would be taken with planting along the northern edge of the site, with areas of tree and shrub planting allowing some views towards new housing but also reducing visibility in the wider countryside to the north.

New shrub planting would also be provided along the eastern edge of the development, to protect the visual amenity of existing residents along Well House Lane.

As has been noted, existing dry stone walls around the edges of the site would be retained, and these would help to assimilate the development into its landscape context.

## 4.0 POTENTIAL LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

### 4.1 Introduction

The following landscape appraisal is based upon both a desk top assessment of existing character assessments and plans as well as a site-based survey. In accordance with GLVIA3 existing landscape character assessments are first reviewed, and then an independent landscape appraisal for the site and its context is provided. The main landscape receptors, (individual landscape elements, aesthetic characteristics, overall character), which have the potential to be affected by the proposed allocation are then identified and their sensitivity to residential development has been assessed by considering their value and susceptibility.

The potential landscape effects of residential development are then assessed by combining the sensitivity to development with the likely magnitude of effects.

### 4.2 Existing Landscape Character Assessments

There is a series of existing character assessments which provide a useful context to the character of the site. Drawing H-02 summarises the classification provided by these assessments, but further details of each are set out below.

#### 4.2.1 National Assessment: NCA 37, Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe

At a national level the site is at the transition between two National Character Areas: NCA 37, Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe, and NCA 38 (Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield). Key characteristics of NCA 37 of relevance to the site include:

- *A transitional landscape dissected by steep sided valleys, dropping from the high gritstone hills in the west to lower land in the east, and thus creating an important backdrop to the many industrial towns and villages within and beyond the NCA;*
- *Rivers creating a deeply dissected landscape, with high plateaux cut by steep-sided valleys, and fanning out in 'fingers' across the NCA;*
- *Treeless hill tops with tracts of rough grazing and extensive areas of enclosed pasture to the west, but with broadleaved woodland on steeper valley sides, giving the impression of a well-wooded landscape, especially to the north and west of Sheffield;*
- *Predominantly pastoral farming;*
- *Boundary features that change from distinctive patterns of drystone walls on the upland hills, to hedgerows becoming the predominant field boundary in the east;*
- *Close conjunction between rural landscapes and the rich industrial heritage of the urban areas;*
- *Urban development constrained within valley floors and up side slopes, with location and layout strongly influenced by the landform;*
- *Extensive and dramatic views from higher land out over low-lying land to the east;*
- *In places a dense network of roads and urban development, with many road, rail and canal routes crossing the NCA, and a high density of footpaths throughout.*

Key characteristics of NCA 38 of relevance to the site include the following:

- *A low-lying landscape of rolling ridges with rounded sandstone escarpments and large rivers running through broad valleys, underlain by Pennine Coal Measures.*

- *Local variations in landscape character reflecting variations in underlying geology.*
- *A mixed pattern of built-up areas, industrial land, pockets of dereliction and farmed open country.*
- *Small, fragmented remnants of pre-industrial landscapes and more recent creation of seminatural vegetation, including woodlands, river valley habitats and subsidence flashes, with field boundaries of clipped hedges or fences.*
- *Many areas affected by urban fringe pressures creating fragmented landscapes, some with dilapidated character, separated by substantial stretches of intact agricultural land in both arable and pastoral use.*
- *Features of industrial heritage such as mills, goits, tips, old railway lines, canals and bridges are evident, along with former mining villages.*
- *Widespread influence of transport routes, including canals, roads and railways, with ribbon developments emphasising the urban influence in the landscape.*
- *An extensive network of multi-user trails on former railway lines and canal towpaths, such as the Trans Pennine Trail and the Ebor Way.*

#### **4.2.2 District Level: Barnsley MBC landscape Character Assessment (2002)**

At a District level the applications site is located in a transitional area between several local character areas. The site is located within area E1: West Barnsley Settled Wooded Farmland, but is also close to F1: Ingbirchworth Upland Rolling Farmland, and B1, Upland Don River Valley. Key characteristics of character area E1 of relevance to the site include the following:

- Gently rolling landform with hills and broad valleys
- Small, medium sized and large woodlands
- Substantial areas of intact agricultural land, both in arable and pastoral use
- Irregularly shaped small, medium sized and large fields bounded by hedgerows, stone walls and fences
- Stone farmsteads, often with large modern outbuildings
- Villages and Hamlets set in open countryside

Relevant characteristics of area F1 include the following:

- Fields of pasture comprising medium geometric field units strongly defended by distinctive stone walls
- Beech plantations stand out on the skyline, sometimes enclosed by stone walls
- Unimproved pasture with scrub on steeper slopes
- Scattered farmsteads of sandstone, quarried from the local area
- Windfarm at Spicer Hill is visually prominent on skyline
- Single lane rural roads criss-cross the open countryside, bounded by stone walls
- Panoramic views over adjacent river valleys and towards the open moorland of the Peak District National Park

#### **4.2.3 Local Assessment: Penistone Heritage and Character Assessment (2016)**

This assessment is mainly focused upon the heritage assets of Penistone, but also considers the character of the area and key views. At page 24 the key characteristics of the settlement are identified, and these include the following which are of particular relevance to the site and its context:

- *River Don valley, with relatively steep valley sides leading up to higher rough grazing pasture;*
- *Predominantly pastoral agricultural land use;*
- *Medium sized regular and sub-regular fields divided by stone walls;*
- *Settlement is mostly limited to the rural market town of Penistone and the villages of Hoylandswaine, Thurlstone and Millhouse Green;*
- *Sandstone buildings, often blackened by historic pollution from former industry;*
- *Bustling character within Penistone town centre, quieter elsewhere and tranquil away from settlement;*
- *A628, A629 and Huddersfield-Sheffield railway dividing the landscape;*
- *Quiet country lanes, often single track, crossing the rural landscape;*
- *Historic industrial use still evident in the valley, especially near the River Don;*
- *New development assuming the historic vernacular, using local stone with slate roofs;*
- *Deciduous woodland in the Don Valley, with discreet blocks elsewhere and conifer plantation at Scout Dike Reservoir;*
- *Mid-20th – early 21st century urban extensions with several estates of homogenous character, typically using brick and tile; and*
- *Recreational opportunities afforded particularly by the Transpennine Trail, National Cycle Routes 62 and 627, reservoirs at Royd Moor and Scout Dike, and the network of footpaths.*

The assessment also notes that there are a number of positive aspects of the character of the town that should be sustained:

- *The open rural setting and historic character of Penistone town, as well as the smaller settlements of Hoylandswaine, Thurlstone and Millhouse Green;*
- *Contrast between relatively enclosed views in the River Don valley and panoramic viewpoints on the tops of the surrounding hills;*
- *Strong recreational opportunities, including the Transpennine Trail, the network of footpaths and National Cycle Routes 62 and 627;*
- *Use of local stone, including as a building material and for dry stone walls which enclose fields; and*
- *Distinct green wedge between the settlements of Millhouse Green and Thurlstone.*

## 4.3 The Landscape of the Site and its Context

### 4.3.1 Description of the Character of the Site and Landscape Receptors

GLVIA3 recommends that a landscape character assessment should be carried out as part of the baseline study (paragraph 5.4). This should consider:

- The elements that make up the landscape (physical, land cover and the influence of human activity);
- Aesthetic and perceptual aspects;
- The overall character of the area.

The site comprises several large sloping, open fields of pasture, usually bounded by dry stone walls but also some low, close-clipped hedgerows. There are long views to Penistone town centre to the south and to a gently

undulating, upland skyline in all directions. There are prominent industrial buildings to the west of the site at Westhorpe, and existing houses on Well House Lane are also evident along much of the eastern edge of the site. Traffic on Halifax Road is intermittent but fast moving, and this introduces noise particularly across the northern edge of the site. Traffic on Well House Lane is less frequent and more slow moving, and thus has less influence on the site. There is no tree cover on the site itself, but there are views towards woodlands and tree groups in the Don Valley. A railway line passes the north eastern boundary of the site and is set within a scrub-covered cutting, and thus has little influence on the character of the site itself.

The character of the site most closely accords with the description of Ingbirchworth Upland Rolling Farmland, particularly in relation to pasture fields with stone walls, panoramic views and low woodland cover. However, whereas character area F1 is mostly rural, the site and its context has a more settled nature, with strong visual connections with Penistone as well as the industrial development at Westhorpe, houses at Well House lane and traffic on Halifax Road. In summary the site is classified as part of a character sub-area, Settled Ingbirchworth Upland Rolling Farmland.

Key landscape receptors which would have the potential to be affected by residential development include:

- Open, sloping, pasture fields (with allocation for housing);
- Panoramic long views over Don Valley;
- Influence of nearby houses, roads and other buildings;

#### 4.3.2 The Changing Landscape

GLVIA3 notes that LVIA's should consider not only the site as it is at present, but also how it will become, particularly in the context of local planning policy or land management practices.

As was noted in section 2.0 of this appraisal, the application site is wholly within an area that has been allocated for 414 new homes in the adopted Local Plan. This means that even if the current proposal is not permitted, it is probable that another proposal with a similar quantum of housing will be permitted at a later date.

Similarly, as was also noted at section 2.0 of this report, land to the west of the application site is allocated for 132 new homes.

It is therefore clear that the character of the land between Halifax Road, Well House Lane and Huddersfield Road will be very strongly influenced by residential development within the plan period. The assessment of the effects of the proposed development should therefore take account of this changing baseline.

#### 4.3.3 Susceptibility of the Landscape Receptors

The sloping pasture has an intrinsically high susceptibility to built form, since this is a simple, open landscape and built form would create more variety in colours and forms and would also cause a degree of enclosure. However, it is also important to note that this site is allocated for residential use, and consequently its susceptibility to built form is reduced. The susceptibility of this receptor is therefore **medium**.

Panoramic long views are also intrinsically susceptible to built form, since there is potential that such views could be truncated or lost altogether. However, the site is allocated for development and consequently it has been accepted that some change in these views from the site will occur. There is also potential to retain some of these long views from some green ways and open spaces, particularly given the steeply sloping nature of the site. The susceptibility of this receptor to the proposed development is therefore **medium**.

The influence of nearby houses, roads and other buildings has a **low** susceptibility to new residential development, since the proposed development would intensify these characteristics but not add new elements.

#### 4.3.4 Value of the Landscape

In determining the value of landscapes, it is helpful to start with landscape and landscape-related designations. As has been noted, the site is not included in any landscape or landscape-related designations.

Given the undesignated nature of the site it is useful to consider other factors which might confer value, such as those included in box 5.1 of GLVIA3. In this context it is important to note that the condition of the site is of community value, since the site itself is in relatively good condition, but with some reduction of tranquillity by traffic on Halifax Road and visual intrusion by Westhorpe works. Scenic quality varies across the site, with panoramic views from the upper, northern areas, and greater influence from the existing settlement edge to the south; in overview this is therefore of community value.

In terms of representativeness/distinctiveness, the long views from the site towards the centre of Penistone, and towards the distant rolling ridgelines, provide a clear sense of identity which is also of community value.

There is no potential for public recreation on the site, and consequently it is of low value in this regard. Tranquillity is slightly reduced by the adjacent settlement edge and particularly by traffic on Halifax Road, but the site is still largely quiet and consequently of community value.

Finally, the site does not have any particular associations, for example with literature, art or historical events, and is therefore of low value in this regard.

Based upon this analysis it is concluded that the value of the landscape of the site is of **community value**, that is below the value of a formal designation but of some scenic quality and medium condition. The site would not be valued landscape in the terms of paragraph 170(a) of the NPPF.

#### 4.3.5 Sensitivity of the Landscape Receptors

The sensitivity of landscape receptors can be defined by combining susceptibility with value.

It follows that the sloping pasture receptor has a **medium** sensitivity to the proposed development, as does the panoramic long views receptor. The influence of nearby houses and roads receptor has a **low** sensitivity to the proposed development.

The overall character of the site, described as Settled Ingbirchworth Upland Rolling Farmland sub-area, has a **medium** sensitivity to the proposed development.

#### 4.3.6 Potential Magnitude of Landscape Effects

GLVIA3 states that the magnitude of landscape change can be determined by assessing the size and scale, geographic extent and duration and reversibility of the proposed development.

Compared with the site in its current condition, the proposed development would cause a large scale of change to the sloping pasture fields receptor, over a medium geographic extent, and this would be a permanent change to the landscape. On this basis the proposals would result in a **substantial** magnitude of change to this receptor. However, the site is allocated for the development of 414 homes, and the proposed development proposes 403 homes. In this context the scale of change that would result, when compared to the baseline which results from the allocation, would be **negligible**.

The proposed development would result in a medium scale of change for the panoramic long views receptor when compared with the existing condition of the site, since many long views would continue to be retained throughout the masterplan. These changes would occur over a small geographic extent and would be permanent. When compared against the existing site condition the magnitude of effects on the panoramic long views landscape receptor would be **medium**. However, when compared with the baseline of an alternative development of 414 homes, the magnitude of change would again be **negligible**, since it is likely that alternative proposals would also truncate at least some of the long views from the site.



When compared to the existing site condition the scale of change to the influence of settlement and roads receptor would be medium, and the geographical extent would also be medium, with the duration again being permanent. It therefore follows that when compared against the existing site condition the magnitude of effects on the influence of settlement and roads receptor would be **medium**. However, when compared with the baseline of an alternative development of 414 homes, the magnitude of change would again be **negligible**, since alternative proposals would also increase the influence of settlement upon the site and its locality.

Similarly, the effects on the overall character of the site and its locality – the Settled Ingbirchworth Upland Rolling Farmland sub-area – would be of medium scale and medium extent when compared with the existing condition of the landscape, and consequently the magnitude of effects would **medium** overall. However, when compared with an alternative development of 414 homes the magnitude of effect on local landscape character would be **negligible**.

#### 4.4 Potential Landscape Effects of Development

As GLVIA3 notes, the potential landscape effects should be determined by combining the sensitivity of receptors with the potential magnitude of effects.

Thus, for the open, sloping pasture fields receptor the effects of the proposed development, when compared with the existing site condition, would be **major/moderate and negative in nature**. However, when compared with the baseline of an alternative proposal for 414 homes the effects would be **minor and neutral in nature**.

The effects of the proposed development upon the panoramic long views receptor would be **moderate and negative** when compared with the existing site condition. When compared against the baseline of an alternative proposal for 414 homes this would change to **minor and neutral**.

Effects on the influence of settlement and roads receptor, when compared to the existing site condition, would be **moderate/minor and negative**. However, when compared with an alternative proposal as envisaged within the allocation, the effects would be **negligible and neutral**.

The effects on the overall character of the site and its locality, which have been classified in this report as the Settled Ingbirchworth Upland Rolling Farmland sub-area, would be **moderate and negative** when compared with the existing site condition, but these effects would be **minor and neutral** when assessed against the baseline of an alternative proposal for 414 homes.

#### 4.5 Conclusions of the Landscape Appraisal

A landscape appraisal has been carried out by experienced landscape architects, using both a desk top assessment and site survey. The appraisal has considered the effects of the development compared to the site in its existing condition, and has also considered the effects when compared against an alternative baseline, in which 414 homes are established on the site.

At a national and district level the site has been classified as being within a transitional area within character areas. At a District level application site is located on the edges of area E1: West Barnsley Settled Wooded Farmland, F1: Ingbirchworth Upland Rolling Farmland, and B1, Upland Don River Valley.

The appraisal has concluded that the site fulfils several of the characteristics of the different neighbouring character areas. As a consequence, it has been classified as part of a transitional sub-area, Settled Ingbirchworth Upland Rolling Farmland.

The character of the site and its locality will change considerably within the Local Plan period, as the site is allocated for the development of 414 new homes. Land to the west of the site is also allocated for housing.

The appraisal has concluded that the effects of the proposed development upon the Settled Ingbirchworth Upland Rolling Farmland sub-area would be **moderate and negative** when compared with the existing site condition, and **minor and neutral** when assessed against the baseline of an alternative proposal for 414 homes.



## 5.0 POTENTIAL VISUAL EFFECTS

### 5.1 Introduction

The following preliminary visual appraisal is based upon desk top review and a site-based assessment undertaken in clear conditions. Judgements have been made by an experienced Chartered Landscape Architect.

Overall visibility has been determined by desk top analysis of topographic surveys and maps, as well as site-based assessment.

In accordance with the recommendations of GLVIA3 the potential visual effects of the proposed development have been determined by assessing both the sensitivity of visual receptors and the potential magnitude of visual effect.

### 5.2 Overall Visibility

The overall visibility of the site is largely defined by topography. To the north, the ridgeline at Hoylandswaine and Cat Hill contains views of the site.

To the west views are partially contained by existing buildings and vegetation at Westhorpe works, which abuts the western boundary of the site, although there is some potential for long views towards Royd Moor.

To the south there are open views towards Penistone town centre, and over Penistone to the ridge south of Cubley and Oxspring (including Hartcliff Hill, to the south west of Penistone). Thurlstone Moors, within the Peak District National Park, are visible in the distance to the south west.

To the east there is some potential for views from the vicinity of the A629/A628 roundabout and High lee Farm, but views to the south of the A628 are largely screened by intervening landform.

### 5.3 Potential Visual Receptors

Within the visual envelope of the proposed development the following types of visual receptors have the potential to experience changes in their views:

- Walkers on footpaths around the site, in particular users of the footways along Halifax Road and on footpath 17, to the north; walkers on Well House Lane, and footpath 15 to the east; users of public rights of way in and around Penistone town centre to the south; and glimpsed views from Huddersfield Road, Halifax Road and Well House Lane to the west.
- Walkers and cyclists on the Trans-Pennine Trail.
- Residents in farmsteads to the north and north east of the site; residents on Well House Lane to the east and west of the site; residents in Penistone to the south of the site.
- Vehicle users on Halifax Road, Well House Lane and in central Penistone.

23 viewpoints were selected to represent the potential views within and around the site. The viewpoint locations are illustrated on Figure H-03, and photographs from these viewpoints are shown on Figures H-04 to H-37. No individual viewpoint assessments have been undertaken for this appraisal, but the assessment of potential effects below refers to some of these views as examples.

### 5.4 Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

As Appendix A notes, the sensitivity of visual receptors is determined by combining the value of the viewpoints with the susceptibility of the receptor.

For viewers on public footpaths, the value of the view is Local Authority, whereas the value of viewpoints along footways on roads (such as Halifax Road) is low. The value of views from the Trans-Pennine Trail is national, since this is national cycle route and regional trail. The susceptibility of walkers to changes in views is generally high, since they tend to be focused on the countryside. It follows that viewers on the Trans-Pennine Trail are of high sensitivity to visual change, whereas walkers on other footpaths in the countryside are of medium to high sensitivity. Walkers on the footways along Halifax Road are of medium sensitivity.

Residents in Penistone and in outlying farmsteads are of no more than medium value, but residents are particularly susceptible to changes in their views. It follows that residents around the site are mostly of medium to high sensitivity.

Viewpoints on roads are generally of low or medium value, since these are often not intended as scenic routes. Halifax Road, for example, is certainly of low value, since traffic is travelling at around 50mph and there is therefore little time for vehicle users to appreciate the views around them. However, the centre of Penistone contains several Conservation Areas and is a visitor destination, and roads here are therefore assessed as being of medium value as viewpoints. The susceptibility of viewers within cars is also generally low, particularly on faster roads such as Halifax Road, but susceptibility also increases when roads are slower and provide opportunities to enjoy views. As a result, the sensitivity of viewers in vehicles on fast roads such as Halifax Road is low, although sensitivity for slower roads – for example in Penistone itself – would be low to medium or medium.

## 5.5 Potential Magnitude of Visual Effects for Receptor Groups

As Appendix A explains, the magnitude of visual effects can be defined by determining the size/scale of effect, the geographical extent over which those effects would be experienced, and the duration of the effect. The following sections analyse these potential effects for each of the receptor groups, with reference to some of the viewpoints.

### 5.5.1 Walkers and Cyclists

The views of walkers and cyclists on Halifax Road, to the north of the site, are illustrated (for example) by viewpoints 1, 2, 3 and 4. Viewers at these points would experience a large size/scale of visual change when compared with the existing views, since the open views towards the distant rolling skyline and the town centre would be largely screened by new homes. This change would also be experienced over a medium extent of Halifax Road, and would also be permanent. When compared with the existing situation the proposed development would therefore result in a **substantial** magnitude of change to views.

However, the scale of effect for these viewers would reduce substantially if the development were to be assessed against the baseline of an alternative proposal for 414 homes. In this scenario the size/scale of change would be small, since there would still be houses along the southern edge of Halifax Road and these would also screen some of the long views towards the town centre. When compared with the baseline of an alternative proposal for 414 homes the overall magnitude of visual change would therefore be **slight**.

Whilst there is a strong network of footpaths to the north of the site, views of the proposed development are not always possible due to intervening landform. Viewpoints 5 and 7, for example, would not change as a result of the proposed development. It is only at closer proximity to the site – for example at viewpoint 6 – that the proposed development would be clearly visible, but from this relatively high elevation viewers would be able to see over the development to Penistone town centre and the distant rolling skyline. When compared with the existing views at viewpoint 6 the proposed development would therefore result in a medium size/scale of change, over a small geographical area, (which would be permanent), which would result in a **medium** magnitude of change overall. However, when compared against the baseline of an alternative design for 414 homes this

magnitude would reduce to **negligible**, since houses would also be clearly visible in the middle ground in the alternative scenario.

For walkers on the footways on Well House Lane, to the east of the site, (see for example viewpoints 8 and 9), there would again be a clear change to current views, with new homes visible in the foreground. The size/scale of change would again be large for these viewers, and this view would extend for a medium geographical extent and would be permanent. The magnitude of effect for these viewers, assessed against the condition of existing views, would therefore be **substantial**. However, as for viewers on Halifax Road, if the views are compared against the baseline of an alternative design for 414 homes, as anticipated in the adopted local plan, then the magnitude of effects would be **slight**, since any alternative design would also include new homes in the foreground of these views.

Walkers on footpaths further to the east, towards Hoylandswaine (see for example viewpoints 19, 20, 21) would be able to see the proposed development below the skyline and in the middle ground, but this would be seen in the context of the existing settlement. The size/scale of effect for viewers in these locations would therefore be between small and medium, and this would be visible over a medium geographical extent. The magnitude of effect for these viewers would therefore be **slight to medium**, depending upon the proximity to the site. However, if these effects are compared against the baseline of an alternative development for 414 homes, as envisaged in the allocation, then this magnitude of change would reduce to **negligible**, since both the baseline and the proposed development would require new homes to extend across the site.

For the users of footways on Huddersfield Road, to the west of the site, (see for example viewpoints 10, 11, 12) many of the views are screened by intervening landform and vegetation. Viewpoints 11 and 12, at the northern end of this route, would afford only glimpsed views of the new development beyond Westhorpe Works, and consequently the size/scale of change for walkers here would be only small, and the overall magnitude of change would be **slight**. This magnitude of change would reduce further to **negligible** if compared against a baseline of an alternative development of 414 homes, since an alternative scheme would also be likely to afford glimpsed views of new homes from this perspective.

Views from the Trans-Pennine Trail, to the south, are illustrated by viewpoints 17 and 18. The proposed development would be visible at both of these points, although it would be seen in the context of the existing settlement in the foreground and middle ground. Importantly, open countryside on the skyline would also remain visible in both views, and consequently the rural setting of the town would remain well-defined. The magnitude of effect for viewers in these locations would therefore be **slight**, and this would reduce to **negligible** if the proposed development were to be compared against an alternative development of 414 homes.

### 5.5.2 Residents

The nearest residents to the proposed development are those on Well House Lane, to the east of the site. Views from these properties are illustrated by viewpoints 8 and 9. As has been noted in relation to walkers, above, there would again be a clear change to current views at these viewpoints, with new homes visible in the foreground. The magnitude of effect for these viewers, assessed against the condition of existing views, would therefore be **substantial**. However, if the views are compared against the baseline of an alternative design for 414 homes, as anticipated in the adopted local plan, then the magnitude of effects would be **slight**.

Residents in central Penistone are represented by viewpoints 14, 15 and 16. The proposed development would be glimpsed between existing houses in these views, and would thus be seen in the context of the existing settlement. The magnitude of effects, compared with existing views, would therefore be **slight**, and this would reduce to **negligible** if the development proposals were to be compared against an alternative design for 414 homes, as envisaged in the adopted local plan.

### 5.5.3 Vehicle Users

The largest magnitude of change, when compared to existing views, would be for vehicle users on Halifax Road, since existing open views would be foreshortened by new housing to the south of the road. As has been noted in relation to walkers along this route, above, viewers would experience a **substantial** magnitude of change to views. However, this magnitude would reduce to **slight** if the proposed development is assessed against the baseline of an alternative development for 414 homes, since in this scenario housing would also extend up towards Halifax Road and therefore would also foreshorten views.

For vehicle users on Well House Lane there would also be **substantial** effects as a result of the proposed development when compared against existing views, but these would again reduce to **slight** if the development is compared to an alternative development including 414 homes.

## 5.6 Potential Visual Effects of Development

By combining the sensitivity of receptors with the potential magnitude of effect it is possible to determine the likely level of visual effect which would result from the proposed development. These effects on the different receptor groups are summarised in the following paragraphs.

When compared against as baseline of the existing site condition, there is potential for **major and major moderate effects** for the following receptors:

- **Walkers on Halifax Road and Well House Lane;**
- **Residents on Well House Lane.**

However, if these receptors are assessed against the baseline of an alternative development for 414 homes, the effects would be **moderate**.

The effects of the development on walkers and residents further from the site would all be **moderate or less** when compared against existing views, since the development would occupy a relatively small proportion of the total view and would often be seen in the context of the existing settlement. These effects would reduce further to **minor** if the development is compared against an alternative scenario with 414 homes.

## 5.7 Summary of Visual Effects

A visual appraisal of the potential visual effects of the proposed development has been carried out by an experienced landscape architect following the approach advocated in GLVIA3. The appraisal has considered the effects of the development when compared with existing views, and also when compared against an alternative scenario, as envisaged in the adopted local plan, in which 414 homes are developed on the site.

The proposed development would be visible by a number of receptors around the site, particularly to the north, east and south. Receptor groups which could be affected include walkers and cyclists, residents and vehicle users.

When compared to existing views, the receptors which are most likely to experience the highest levels of visual effects are walkers on Halifax Road and Well House Lane, and residents on Well House Lane. However, when compared against an alternative baseline in which 414 homes are developed upon the site, the visual effects would decrease to moderate.

For other viewpoints in the town centre and footpaths in and around the town the proposed development would be visible, but would be seen in the context of the existing settlement. In most views, the open hills beyond the development would also be visible. The visual effects for residents and walkers in these locations would therefore be moderate or less, when compared with existing views. These effects reduce further if the development were to be compared with an alternative scenario in which 414 homes are developed on the site.

## 6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

SLR Consulting Ltd (SLR) was instructed by Barratt David Wilson Homes (West Yorkshire) Ltd, (BDW) to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) of a proposed new residential development site to the south of Halifax Road, Penistone.

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

- To identify the landscape character of the site and its context, as well as the nature of views towards and from the site, in order to inform the design of the masterplan;
- To assess the potential landscape and visual effects which would be likely to occur if the proposed development were to take place.

This assessment has been carried out by experienced Chartered Landscape Architects following the principles within the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3).

### Summary of Planning Context

The site is entirely outside of national landscape designations, and is also outside of the Green Belt. There are no ecological or heritage designations within or immediately adjacent to the site.

The site is allocated for 414 new homes in the adopted Local Plan. Policy HS75 of the Local Plan requires that the landscape setting of the settlement should be maintained and enhanced.

### Conclusions of the Landscape Appraisal

A landscape appraisal has been carried out by experienced landscape architects, using both a desk top assessment and site survey. The appraisal has considered the effects of the development compared to the site in its existing condition, and has also considered the effects when compared against an alternative baseline, in which 414 homes are established on the site.

At a national and district level the site has been classified as being within a transitional area within character areas. At a District level application site is located on the edges of area E1: West Barnsley Settled Wooded Farmland, F1: Ingbirchworth Upland Rolling Farmland, and B1, Upland Don River Valley.

The appraisal has concluded that the site fulfils several of the characteristics of the different neighbouring character areas. As a consequence, it has been classified as part of a transitional sub-area, Settled Ingbirchworth Upland Rolling Farmland.

The character of the site and its locality will change considerably within the Local Plan period, as the site is allocated for the development of 414 new homes. Land to the west of the site is also allocated for housing.

The appraisal has concluded that the effects of the proposed development upon the Settled Ingbirchworth Upland Rolling Farmland sub-area would be **moderate and negative** when compared with the existing site condition, and **minor and neutral** when assessed against the baseline of an alternative proposal for 414 homes.

### Conclusions of the Visual Appraisal

A visual appraisal of the potential visual effects of the proposed development has been carried out by an experienced landscape architect following the approach advocated in GLVIA3. The appraisal has considered the effects of the development when compared with existing views, and also when compared against an alternative scenario, as envisaged in the adopted local plan, in which 414 homes are developed on the site.

The proposed development would be visible by a number of receptors around the site, particularly to the north, east and south. Receptor groups which could be affected include walkers and cyclists, residents and vehicle users.

When compared to existing views, the receptors which are most likely to experience the highest levels of visual effects are walkers on Halifax Road and Well House Lane, and residents on Well House Lane. However, when compared against an alternative baseline in which 414 homes are developed upon the site, the visual effects would decrease to moderate.

For other viewpoints in the town centre and footpaths in and around the town the proposed development would be visible, but would be seen in the context of the existing settlement. In most views, the open hills beyond the development would also be visible. The visual effects for residents and walkers in these locations would therefore be moderate or less, when compared with existing views. These effects reduce further if the development were to be compared with an alternative scenario in which 414 homes are developed on the site.

### Overall Conclusions

Residential development on the site would result in some localised major and major/moderate landscape and visual effects – but that is common for this type of development on green field sites.

It is also important to recognise that this site has an allocation for 414 homes, and consequently even if this proposal does not go ahead an alternative proposal for a similar number of homes would be very likely to take place within the plan period. It is in this context that a further assessment of potential landscape and visual effects has been carried out, and this has concluded that the effects of the proposed development would be greatly decreased.

Critically, the design of the development has been shaped by this landscape and visual appraisal, as well as by advice from the Barnsley Urban Design Advisory Panel. The design for the assessment therefore responds to its context, with a soft green edge to the north and west, retained views towards the town centre and a clear transition from open countryside to suburban character within the site.

## APPENDIX A

# Criteria and Definitions Used in Landscape and Visual Appraisals

## Introduction

Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) is a tool used to identify the potential effects of development on “*landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and visual amenity*” (GLVIA3, paragraph 1.1). It is an assessment used at an early stage in the site planning or masterplanning process, before the design has been fully resolved.

Although LVA does not consider detailed landscape and visual effects as a landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) does, it still follows the principles set out in GLVIA3.<sup>1</sup> GLVIA3 is the main source of guidance on LVIA.

Landscape is a definable set of characteristics resulting from the interaction of natural, physical and human factors: it is a resource in its own right. Its assessment is distinct from visual assessment, which considers effects on the views and visual amenity of different groups of people at particular locations. Clear separation of these two topics is recommended in GLVIA3.

As GLVIA3 (paragraph 2.23) states, professional judgement is an important part of the LVIA (and LVA) process: whilst there is scope for objective measurement of landscape and visual changes, much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements. It is critical that these judgements are based upon a clear and transparent method so that the reasoning can be followed and examined by others.

Landscape and visual effects can be positive, negative or neutral in nature. Positive effects are those which enhance and/or reinforce the characteristics which are valued. Negative effects are those which remove and/or undermine the characteristics which are valued. Neutral effects are changes which are consistent with the characteristics of the landscape or view.

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<sup>1</sup> Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ (Third Edition, April 2013)



## Landscape Effects

Landscape, as defined in the European Landscape Convention, is defined as “*an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*”, (Council of Europe, 2000). Landscape does not apply only to special or designated places, nor is it limited to countryside.

GLVIA3 (paragraph 5.34) recommends that the effect of the development on landscape receptors is assessed. Landscape receptors are the components of the landscape that are likely to be affected by the proposed development, and can include individual elements (such as hedges or buildings), aesthetic and perceptual characteristics (for example sense of naturalness, tranquillity or openness), or, at a larger scale, the character of a defined character area or landscape type. Designated areas (such as National Parks or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are also landscape receptors.

This assessment is being undertaken because the proposed development has the potential to remove or add elements to the landscape, to alter aesthetic or perceptual aspects, and to add or remove characteristics and thus potentially change overall character.

Judging landscape effects requires a methodical assessment of the sensitivity of the landscape receptors to the proposed development and the magnitude of effect which would be experienced by each receptor.

### Landscape Sensitivity

Sensitivity of landscape receptors is assessed by combining an assessment of the susceptibility of landscape receptors to the type of change which is proposed with the value attached to the landscape. (GLVIA3, paragraph 5.39).

#### Value Attached to Landscape Receptors

Landscape receptors may be valued at community, local, national or international level. Existing landscape designations provide the starting point for this assessment.

Where landscapes are not designated and where no other local authority guidance on value is available, an assessment is made by reference to criteria in Box 5.1 of GLVIA3 which in turn is based on the Landscape Character Assessment Guidance of 2002<sup>2</sup>. In accordance with the judgement of Justice Ouseley,<sup>3</sup> the landscape and visual attributes of the site as a whole are also reviewed to determine whether the site has demonstrable physical attributes which elevate it above ordinary countryside.

#### Susceptibility of Landscape Receptors to Change

As set out in GLVIA3, susceptibility refers to the ability of the landscape receptor to “*accommodate the proposed development without undue adverse consequences for the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies*”. Judgement of susceptibility is

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<sup>2</sup> Swanwick C and Land Use Consultants (2002), Landscape Character Assessment for England and Scotland, Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage

<sup>3</sup> CO/4082/2014 Neutral Citation Number: [2015] EWHC 488 (Admin) In the High Court of Justice Queen's Bench Division the Administrative Court Before: Mr Justice Ouseley Between: Stroud District Council, Claimant V Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Defendant

particular to the specific characteristics of the proposed development and the ability of a particular landscape or feature to accommodate the type of change proposed.

### **Magnitude of Landscape Change**

The magnitude of landscape change is established by assessing the size or scale of change, the geographical extent of the area influenced and the duration and potential reversibility of the change.

### **Size and Scale of Change**

The size and/or scale of change in the landscape takes into consideration the following factors:

- the extent/proportion of landscape elements lost or added; and/or
- the degree to which aesthetic/perceptual aspects are altered; and
- whether this is likely to change the key characteristics of the landscape.

The criteria used to assess the size and scale of landscape change are based upon the amount of change that will occur as a result of the proposed development, as described in Table A5 below.

### **Geographical Extent of Change**

The geographical extent of landscape change is assessed by determining the area over which the changes will influence the landscape. For example this could be at the site level, in the immediate setting of the site, or over some or all of the landscape character types or areas affected.

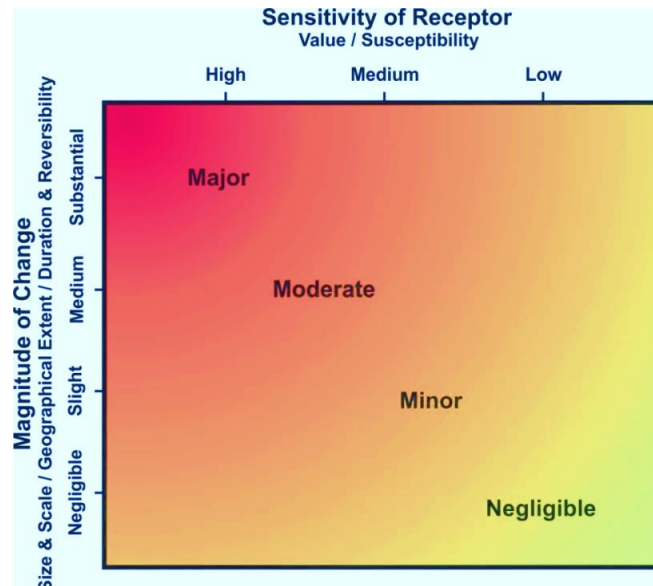
### **Duration and Reversibility of Change**

The duration of the landscape change considers whether the change will be permanent and irreversible or temporary and reversible.

### **Assessment of Landscape Effects and Significance**

The assessment of landscape effects and their significance is defined in terms of the relationship between the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of the change. The diagram below (Figure A1) summarises the nature of the relationship but it is not formulaic. Judgements are made about each landscape effect using this diagram as a guide.

**Fig A1: Assessment of Landscape Effects and Overall Significance**



## Visual Effects

Visual effects are the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. Visual receptors are the people whose views may be affected by the proposed development. They generally include users of public rights of way or other recreational facilities or attractions; travellers who may pass through the study area because they are visiting, living or working there; residents living in the study area, either as individuals or, more often, as a community; and people at their place of work.

Judging visual effects requires an assessment of the sensitivity of the visual receptors to the proposed development and the magnitude of effect which would be experienced by each receptor.

Viewpoints are chosen for a variety of reasons but most commonly because they represent views experienced by relevant groups of people.

### Visual Sensitivity

Sensitivity of visual receptors is assessed by combining an assessment of the susceptibility of visual receptors to the type of change which is proposed with the value attached to the views. (GLVIA3, paragraph 6.30).

### Value Attached to Views

Different levels of value are attached to the views experienced by particular groups of people at particular viewpoints. Assessment of value takes account of a number of factors, including:

- Recognition of the view through some form of planning designation or by its association with particular heritage assets; and

- The popularity of the viewpoint, in part denoted by its appearance in guidebooks, literature or art, or on tourist maps, by information from stakeholders and by the evidence of use including facilities provided for its enjoyment (seating, signage, parking places, etc.); and
- Other evidence of the value attached to views by people including consultation with local planning authorities and professional assessment of the quality of views.

### Susceptibility of Visual Receptors to Change

The susceptibility of different types of people to changes in views is mainly a function of:

- The occupation or activity of the viewer at a given viewpoint; and
- The extent to which the viewer's attention or interest be focussed on a particular view and the visual amenity experienced at a given view.

### Magnitude of Visual Change

The magnitude of visual change is established by assessing the size or scale of change, the geographical extent of the area influenced and the duration and potential reversibility of the change.

### Size and Scale of Change

The criteria used to assess the size and scale of visual change at each viewpoint are as follows:

- the scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view, changes in its composition, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development and distance of view;
- 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 factors such as form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture; and
- the nature of the view of the proposed development, for example whether views will be full, partial or glimpses or sequential views while passing through the landscape.

### Geographical Extent of Change

The geographical extent of the visual change identified at representative viewpoints is assessed by reference to a combination of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), where this has been prepared, and field work.

The following factors are considered for each representative viewpoint:

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

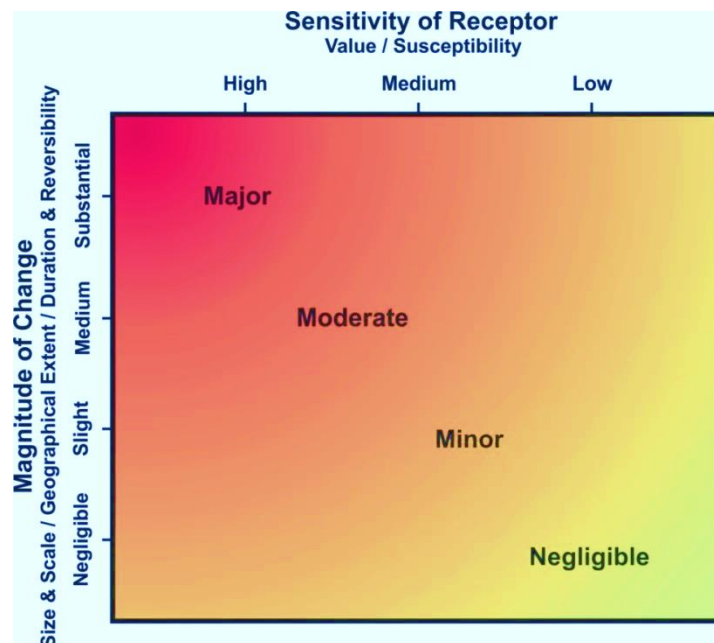
### Duration and Reversibility of Change

The duration of the visual change includes consideration of whether views will be permanent and irreversible or temporary and reversible.

### Assessment of Visual Effects and Significance

The assessment of visual effects is defined in terms of the relationship between the sensitivity of the visual receptors (value and susceptibility) and the magnitude of the change. The diagram below (Figure A2) summarises the nature of the relationship but it is not formulaic and only indicates broad levels of effect. Judgements are made about each visual effect using this diagram as a guide.

**Figure A2: Assessment of Visual Effects and Overall Significance**



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