# The Seam, Barnsley

## Visual Impact Assessment

Revision A

*Prepared on behalf of:*

***Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC)***

August 2022

BDP.

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## Contents

# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Context

1.1.1 This Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) has been prepared by BDP on behalf of the applicant, Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council ('BMBC'). It assesses the proposed development and considers its visual effects

1.1.2 The baseline situation is considered before the likely visual effects of the development are identified, both during construction and operational phases of the development. Mitigation measures to reduce any adverse visual effects are identified as appropriate before the residual effects are assessed.

1.1.3 This chapter is supported by the following technical appendices:

- Appendix 1: Viewpoint Imagery, including location plans, existing and proposed views.
- Appendix 2: Viewpoint Descriptions

## 1.2 Purpose of this Assessment

1.2.1 The purpose of this assessment is to assess the likely visual effects of the proposed development on long-range views to the site. Three representative views have been selected in consultation with BMBC planners: these are detailed in the attached appendices.

## 1.3 Structure

1.3.1 The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- Section 2: Policy Context
- Section 3: Assessment Methodology and Significance Criteria
- Section 4: Baseline Conditions
- Section 5: Potential Effects
- Section 6: Mitigation and Monitoring
- Section 7: Summary and Conclusions

# 2.0 Policy Context

## 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The following guidelines, legislation, and planning policy documents provide the framework for the protection and conservation of landscape within the study area. Current planning policy and legislation directly relevant to the assessment of visual effects for the proposed development are briefly outlined below.

## 2.2 National Legislation

2.2.1 This section provides detail on the parts of the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') that are relevant to Visual Impact Assessment.

2.2.2 Section 12 of the NPPF sets the requirement for good design in the built environment and provides the overarching guidance concerning design of new development, stating that *"planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping, and that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities)"* (para 130)

## 2.3 Local Planning Policy Context

2.3.1 Local planning authorities have powers to designate local areas of outstanding scenic quality and character via the development plan process however no such designations have been made within the site area.

2.3.2 Key relevant local planning documents include:

- Barnsley Local Plan (January 2019)
- Barnsley Building Heights Study (October 2009)

**Barnsley Local Plan (2019)**

2.3.3 The following policies are relevant to the Visual Impact Assessment:

- Policy D1 High Quality Design and Place Making – states that development is expected to be of high quality design and respect, take advantage of, and reinforce the distinctive local character and features of Barnsley, including views and vistas to key buildings, landmarks, skylines, and gateways.
- Policy LC1 Landscape Character – states that development will be expected to retain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the individual Landscape Character area in which it is located (as set out in the Landscape Character Assessment of Barnsley Borough 2009 and any subsequent amendments.

**Barnsley Building Heights Study (2009)**

2.3.4 The Barnsley Building Heights Study sets a vision for Barnsley's skyline, providing a strategic direction of travel for development in and around the town.

2.3.5 The study identified ten strategic viewpoints which provide a snapshot of the Barnsley skyline and highlight key views into the town centre.

2.3.6 The study also states that applicants will be required to demonstrate how their proposal maximises its positive visual effect and minimises any negative visual impacts. The importance of retaining and enhancing strategic and local views through the sensitive siting of tall buildings is emphasised as a key objective.

# 3.0 Assessment Methodology and Significance Criteria

## 3.1 Assessment Methodology

3.1.1 The approach and methodology used in the Visual Impact Assessment has been developed using best practice guidance, as set out in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third Edition) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management Assessment (2013).

3.1.2 The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA3) acknowledges that LVIA (and by extension, Visual Impact Assessments) can be carried out either as a standalone assessment or as part of a broader EIA.

3.1.3 This Visual Impact Assessment is a standalone assessment to support an application for development of a multi-storey car park (6 storeys above ground, 386 no. spaces), active travel hub (479 sqm), public realm and access, and outline planning permission for 136 dwellings (Use Class C3) and 1887 sqm ground floor commercial space (Use Class E), with all matters reserved at land off County Way, Barnsley.

3.1.4 The assessment process comprises the following key stages:

- Determine the scope of the assessment;
- Collate baseline information relating to the existing visual context of the receiving environment through desk study research and field-based assessment;
- Review the type of development proposed and identify and describe the likely impacts (enabling specific judgements to be made on the sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors);
- Establish the sensitivity of visual receptors (balancing judgements on value and susceptibility);
- Determine the magnitude of impacts (balancing judgements on size/scale, duration and reversibility);
- Assess the significance of likely visual effects through a balanced approach and clear description of professional judgements on sensitivity and magnitude; and
- Identify any design and mitigation measures appropriate to the development proposals and landscape of the receiving area, to avoid or remedy impacts and the subsequent reassessment of likely effects.

3.1.5 An initial desk study of existing information has been undertaken to gather baseline information for the assessment. This stage informs subsequent field surveys, providing a crucial information base that underpins the assessment of character and visual impact. Subsequent field surveys and assessments were then undertaken to record the visual qualities of the proposal site and surrounding area.

## 3.2 Visual Impact Assessment Criteria

3.2.1 The Visual Impact Assessment draws from an identification of the sensitivity receptors (locations from which people would be able to view the proposed development) within the local area and the magnitude of change that would result from the construction and operation of the development, based upon information gathered through site surveys and analysis of the design proposals.

3.2.2 The impact assessment describes the current visual context from important viewpoints within the landscape and evaluates the implications of the proposed development for users of the areas neighbouring the proposed development. It describes any mitigation measures that help to avoid or reduce the potential for adverse visual effects.

## 3.3 Viewpoint Selection

3.3.1 A number of visual receptors within 2km of the site boundary have been considered for assessment, informed by the Barnsley Building Heights Study (2002), which highlights ten key strategic views of town centre.

3.3.2 A key part of the visual assessment is the assessment of effects from predetermined viewpoints, which reflect views of the proposed development that would be experienced by different receptors. Viewpoints fall into three categories, as set out in GLVIA p.109, para 6.18:

- Representative viewpoints (selected to represent the experience of different types of visual receptor);
- Specific viewpoints (a key view or sometimes promoted viewpoint within the landscape, for example, a specific local visitor attraction); and
- Illustrative viewpoints (which illustrate a particular effect or specific issue, for example, the restricted visibility at a certain location).

3.3.3 Representative viewpoints have been selected for key visual receptors within the study area in consultation with Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC), as described in Section 3.8.

3.3.4 It is impractical to consider views from all residential properties, including private land, due to access restrictions. The emphasis of this assessment is on potential effects, and it was considered appropriate to consider viewpoints from publicly accessible roads and footpaths with a view to the site. The viewpoints within this VIA are all representative viewpoints.

3.3.5 The assessment of potential visibility from selected representative viewpoints is typically aided by the use of visually representative material. To illustrate the potential effects of the proposed development within the townscape a ‘massing model’ of the site masterplan has been used to create three distinct viewpoints of the proposed development as assessed in this VIA.

3.3.6 Each receptor was visited in July 2022.

3.3.7 Factors considered during the site assessment of visual receptor sensitivity to landscape change included:

- Receptor type and number (e.g. dwelling / footpath);
- Receptor height relative to potentially intrusive elements of the proposed development;
- Proportion of view likely to be occupied by any aspect of the proposed development;
- Viewpoint position (view up / view down / level view);
- Angle of view (acute / perpendicular / average);
- Position of the scheme in the view (foreground / mid-ground / background); and
- Analysis of potential impact.

## 3.4 Visual Sensitivity to Change

3.4.1 The sensitivity of a visual receptor is dependent on the importance of the viewpoint, the value and quality of the view, and the nature and expectation of the viewer. This includes heritage values, as week as a wider spectrum of considerations on community use, location, economic and social factors.

3.4.2 A viewpoint that is marked on tourist maps, signposted or otherwise recognised will have greater importance, and this may be increased if facilities for the enjoyment of the view are provided, such as a viewpoint indicator, benches or footpaths. Conversely, a viewpoint located on a minor road will tend to have limited importance. A viewpoint that is visited or used by a large number of people will tend to have greater importance than one visited by very few people, although this is not always the case. The importance of the view experienced by the receptor also contributes to an understanding of the susceptibility of the visual receptor to change as well as the value attached to the view.

3.4.3 The GLVIA identifies that the susceptibility of visual receptors to changed in views and visual amenity is a function of (GLVIA3, para 6.32):

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

3.4.4 A judgement is also made on the value attached to the views experienced. This takes account of (GLVIA3, para 6.37):

- Recognition of the value attached to particular views, for example concerning heritage assets, or through planning designations; and
- Indicators of the value attached to views by visitors, for example through appearance in guidebooks or on tourist maps, provision of facilities for their enjoyment (signboards, interpretive material) and reference to them in literature or art.

3.4.5 The value and quality of the view is a reflection of the scenic qualities of the view. The value of the view will be increased if it overlooks a designated area such as an AONB or Conservation Area. The quality of the view will be increased if the condition of the landscape is near to optimum for its type. Views that are well known at a local level for their scenic qualities can also have an increased value, even if there is no formal recognition or designation. The greater the value and quality of the view, the greater the sensitivity is likely to be.

3.4.6 Viewers whose attention is focussed on the landscape, for example, walkers that are travelling through an area to enjoy the view, are likely to have a higher sensitivity. A view that is gained from a place where people gather, with some awareness of and focus on their surroundings, may also have increased importance, as will residents of properties that may gain constant views of the proposed development. Viewers travelling in cars or on trains will tend to have lower sensitivity as they are transient. The least sensitive viewers are usually people at their place of work, as they tend to be less sensitive to changes in the view unless a location has been specifically selected for enjoyment of the view as part of the work environment.

3.4.7 Following consideration of the above, and taking into account guidance contained in the GLVIA3, the sensitivity of the visual receptor is grades as low, medium or high, as defined in the table below.

| Sensitivity | Description |
|---|---|
| High | The view is likely to be an internationally, nationally, or regionally important view. Could include landmark features of international, national, or regional importance with high amenity value. The view will include significant elements of visual interest and attractive or notable compositional qualities. The view will also be enjoyed by a large number of recreational users and visitors, possibly for the sole purpose of enjoying the view or the public amenity. Viewers could also include residents (predominantly ground floor rooms). The view could also include significant heritage assets such as World Heritage Sites and Grade I and II* Listed buildings. |
| Medium | The view is likely to be an undesignated view or a locally recognised view. The view could include some features of value or interest with limited signs of neglect or degradation. The view will be either intentional or incidental to the viewer, with some amenity value. The view could include significant elements of visual interest and attractive or notable compositional qualities. It may also be a view that contains heritage assets such as world heritage sites, Grade I or II* Listed buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Grade I or II* registered historic parks / gardens with clear historic significance but not best represented in this particular view. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Low | The view is likely to be an undesignated view, which does not include any landmark features and is of low amenity value, showing signs of neglect and degradation. The view is unlikely to include elements of visual interest and attractive or notable compositional qualities. The view will be incidental to the viewer, and in most cases, the view will be in motion. It may contain heritage assets such as Grade II Listed buildings, Conservation Areas or locally listed buildings with clear historic significance, but not best represented in this particular view. |

3.4.8 The assessment has been aided by a series of computer-generated 'Photomontage' images. These visualisations combine a photograph of an existing view with a computer-generated massing model of the proposed buildings. They provide a representation of the scale of the proposed development.

## 3.5 Assessment Method

3.5.1 The evaluation of effects assessment has involved the following considerations:

- The extent to which the proposed development would change the composition of the existing view and how this view is experienced; and
- The sensitivity to change based on the information gathered through site survey and analysis of the planning of the proposed development in relation to the sensitivity of the landscape and the baseline conditions.

## 3.6 Magnitude of Change to Visual Receptors

3.6.1 The magnitude of change within views is an important element of visual impact assessment. For the proposed development, this has considered the extent of the project likely to be visible, and the degree of change to current views that would result from the proposed development. The magnitude of change is raked as follows:

| Magnitude of Change | Description |
|---|---|
| Substantial | The proposed development constitutes and immediately apparent feature in the view and has a material influence on the receptor. |
| Moderate | The proposed development constitutes a visible and recognisable feature in the view and is generally distinguishable from the existing baseline characteristics and has a readily apparent influence on the receptor. |
| Minor | The proposed development forms a minor component of the view and is generally indistinguishable from the existing baseline characteristics. Its influence on the receptor may be missed. |
| Negligible | The proposed development is barely discernible in the view and is indistinguishable from the existing baseline characteristics. Its influence on the receptor equates to a 'no change' situation. |

3.6.2 The extent to which a sensitive receptor may be affected by the proposed development will influence the magnitude of change. If the proposed development influences a limited part of a visual receptor, the magnitude of change will generally be lower.

3.6.3 The degree of change in the character of a receptor will influence the magnitude of change. The greater degree of contrast between the existing and the proposed character, the higher the magnitude of change.

3.6.4 Several aspects affect the magnitude of change to visual receptors. These are as follows:

- The distance between the visual receptor and the proposed development – Generally, the greater the distance, the lower the magnitude of change, as the proposed development will constitute a smaller and generally less apparent external influence or component of the view;
- The extent of the receptor that will be affected by visibility and, therefore, the influence of the proposed development – If the proposed development affects a limited part of the visual receptor, such as a road route, the magnitude of change will generally be lower;
- The extent of the proposed development that will be seen – Visibility may range from part of, to the whole proposed development. The implication of this on the visual character receptor can vary and is largely dependent on distance. While an outlook over the majority of the proposed development will generally increase its influence on the receptor, a long view in which the whole proposed development is visible can have a more limited influence and, therefore, a lower magnitude of change than a close view where only part of the proposed development is seen, due to intervening landform or existing built form. Views may be glimpsed, partial, filtered or open;
- The position of the proposed development in relation to the principal orientation of the visual receptor or in relation to any existing focus of views from the receptor – If the proposed development is seen in a specific, directional vista from a receptor such as a route, the magnitude of change will generally be greater; if the proposed development is seen in the context of an existing external influence or eye-catching external feature, the magnitude of change may be greater;
- The context within which the proposed development will be seen – This is important as it will determine the contrast that the proposed development will have on the existing outlook. The scale and patterns of the landscape, the existing land uses, and the degree and type of proposed development and settlement seen in the view will all be relevant;
- The proportion of the view that is affected by the visibility of the proposed development – Where an elevated viewpoint may offer views of the entire proposed development it may be seen in the context of a wide panorama or a long depth of field thus reducing its importance within the view; and
- The extent to which a sensitive receptor may be affected by the proposed development will influence the magnitude of change. If the proposed development influences a limited part of an LCZ or visual receptor, the magnitude of change will generally be lower.

## 3.7 Significance Criteria

3.7.1 The objective of the assessment process is to identify and evaluate the potentially significant effects arising from the proposed development. The assessment identifies the residual effects likely to arise from the finalised design taking into account mitigation measures and change over time. The significance of effects is assessed by considering the sensitivity of the receptor and the predicted magnitude of effect in relation to the baseline conditions.

3.7.2 The assessment of significance is based upon pre-defined criteria, as outlined in the table below. When assessing significance, individual effects may fall across several different categories of significance and professional judgement is used to determine which category of significance best fits the overall effect on the visual receptor..

| Nature of Effect | Description |
|---|---|
| Substantial Beneficial | The proposed development would cause a material improvement in a view. In most instances, this category of significance will arise where a very high or high sensitivity receptor is assessed as being likely to experience a moderate/ major magnitude of change and that is |

| | |
|---|---|
| | beneficial in nature. Alternatively, a moderate magnitude of change on a highly sensitive receptor or a major magnitude of change on a moderate sensitivity receptor may result in a major level of significance. |
| Moderate Beneficial | The proposed development would cause a notable improvement in a view. In most instances, this category of significance will arise where a moderate sensitivity receptor is assessed as being likely to experience a moderate magnitude of change that is beneficial in nature. Alternatively, a minor magnitude of change on a highly sensitive receptor or a major magnitude of change on a low sensitivity receptor may result in a moderate level of significance. |
| Minor Beneficial | The proposed development would cause a perceptible improvement in a view. In most instances, this category of significance will arise where a low/ moderate sensitivity receptor is assessed as being likely to experience a minor/ moderate magnitude of change that is beneficial in nature. |
| Neutral / Negligible | The proposed development would cause no discernible deterioration or improvement in a view. In most instances, a negligible effect will arise where a low sensitivity receptor is assessed as being likely to experience a negligible magnitude of change. |
| Minor Adverse | The proposed development would cause a perceptible deterioration in a view. In most instances, this category of significance will arise where a low/moderate sensitivity receptor is assessed as being likely to experience a minor/ moderate magnitude of change and one which is adverse in nature. |
| Moderate Adverse | The proposed development would cause a notable deterioration in a view. In most instances, this category of significance will arise where a moderate sensitivity receptor is assessed as being likely to experience a moderate magnitude of change that is adverse in nature. Alternatively, a minor magnitude of change on a highly sensitive receptor or a major magnitude of change on a low sensitivity receptor may result in a moderate level of significance. |
| Substantial Adverse | The proposed development would cause a material deterioration in a view. In most instances, this category of significance will arise where a very high or high sensitivity receptor is assessed as being likely to experience a moderate/ major magnitude of change that is adverse in nature. Alternatively, a moderate magnitude of change on a highly sensitive receptor or a major magnitude of change on a moderate sensitivity receptor may result in a major level of significance. |

3.7.3 Visual effects classified as moderate or substantial are likely to be considered significant whereas those classified as minor or negligible are likely not to be considered significant.

3.7.4 The nature of each effect is based on the ability of the visual receptor to accommodate the proposed development, and the appearance of the proposed development within the receiving context and is assessed to be beneficial or adverse. A change to the landscape or visual resource is not considered to be adverse simply because it constitutes an alternation to the existing situation.

3.7.5 With regards to the judgement of significant visual effects, GLVIA3 states:

*"There are no hard and fast rules about what makes a significant effect, and there cannot be a standard approach since circumstances vary with the location and context and with the type of proposal. In making a judgement about the significance of visual effects the following points should be noted:*

*1. Effects on people who are particularly sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity are more likely to be significant;*

*2. Effects on people at recognised and important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes are more likely to be significant;*

*3. Large-scale changes which introduce new, non-characteristic or discordant or intrusive elements into the view are more likely to be significant than small changes or changes involving features already present within the view."*

3.7.6 The following terms have been used to define residual effects on the visual resources:

- Adverse: the proposed development results in a loss of visual amenity; and
- Beneficial: the proposed development improved visual amenity.

3.7.7 The effects will be further categorised according to the duration, i.e. short, medium or long-term and reversibility whether the effect is permanent or temporary (demolition and construction works are considered to be temporary).

3.7.8 Significance criteria are determined as follows:

| **Magnitude of Change** | **Sensitivity of Receptor** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Low | Medium | High |
| | Negligible | Negligible | Negligible | Negligible |
| | Minor | Minor | Minor | Minor to Moderate* |
| | Moderate | Minor | Moderate* | Moderate* to Substantial* |
| | Substantial | Minor to Moderate* | Moderate* to Substantial* | Substantial* |

*Moderate and substantial effects are considered to be significant.

## 3.8 Consultation

3.8.1 Consultation on potentially sensitive visual receptors has been undertaken as follows:

- BDP, acting on behalf of BMBC, contacted BMBC Planning on 05/07/2022 to confirm the scope and content of the Visual Impact Assessment, highlighting three potential views for review.
- SMBC Planning returned comments to BDP on 21/07/2022, confirming the need for views along Wakefield Road, and requesting a view from the Monk Bretton area near the Rotherham Road / Burton Road junction. No further comments were received.
- BDP confirmed on 26/07/2022 that the comments received had been incorporated and the selected views would be modelled for assessment.

## 3.9 Assumptions and Limitations

3.9.1 As the emphasis of this assessment is on potential significant effects, it was considered appropriate to consider viewpoints from residential areas with representative views of the proposed development (GLVIA, pg.107, para 6.17) as visual receptors most susceptible to change include residents at home (GLVIA, pg. 113, para 6.33). As it is impractical to consider views from all residential properties representative viewpoints have been assessed. Access to private residential properties was not requested as part of the visual assessment of effects. The assessment was made based on views obtainable from nearby publicly accessible locations, i.e. roads and public rights of way.

# 4.0 Baseline Conditions

## 4.1 Existing Conditions

4.1.1 This section provides and understanding of the existing visual context of the proposed development. It draws from desk-study and site assessment to provide an overview of the visual context.

### Site Description

4.1.2 The site is located within Barnsley Town Centre, immediately adjacent to the Transport Interchange which sits to the south of the site. The site is approximately 2 Ha.

4.1.3 The site is bounded by the railway line to the east, the A635 to the north, County Way to the west and Eldon Street North to the south. The existing DMC01 building and the Courthouse pub lie immediately adjacent to the site in the south east.

4.1.4 The site is broadly flat but sits within the wider context of Barnsley Town Centre to the west, and the Dearne Valley to the east, resulting in substantial changes in the topography on either side.

## 4.2 Visual Context

4.2.1 The visual context of the site is defined by the dramatic topography of Barnsley's urban and landscape character.

4.2.2 The majority of tall buildings and town centre developments are built on higher ground, resulting in clear views of the town centre from surrounding areas – particularly across the Dearne Valley to the east.

4.2.3 The Strategic Views identified within the Barnsley Building Heights Study (2002) have been reviewed to gain a fuller understanding of the wider visual context. These have informed the selection of Sensitive Visual Receptors for this assessment.

### Sensitive Visual Receptors

4.2.4 The sensitive visual receptors listed below have the potential to be affected by effects arising from the proposed development. The identification of sensitive visual receptors has taken into account the considerations, studies and assessments set out above, in addition to site visits. This has allowed due consideration of the important features and characteristics that contribute to visual quality and enabled the identification of their sensitivity.

| No. | View Location | Direction of View | Reasons |
|---|---|---|---|
| Vp1 | Junction of Wakefield Road, Old Mill Lane and Burton Road. | S-W | Representative viewpoint from footpath on Wakefield Road, providing views to the site. |
| Vp2 | Public footpath off Rotherham Road | W | Representative viewpoint from a public footpath off Rotherham Road providing clear views across to the town centre. |
| Vp3 | Old Mill Lane | W | Representative viewpoint from pavement / road users on Old Mill Lane, providing potential mid-range view to the site. |

4.2.5 A full description of Viewpoint locations is included in Appendix 2. The Viewpoint locations described in Appendix 2 include the description of susceptibility, value, and sensitivity. These criteria are then

applied in the visual impact assessment. Appendix 1 illustrates the location of the viewpoints and a the set of views which have informed the assessment.

4.2.6 The following receptors were included in the initial assessment but were scoped out following visits to the site. For the reasons outlined below these receptors have been discounted.

| Receptor | Description |
|---|---|
| Wakefield Road / Rotherham Road | A number of potential viewpoints were considered along Wakefield Road and Rotherham Road, including the junction of Wakefield Road and Rotherham Road which lies approximately 2km north of the proposed development site. Whilst the site would be visible from these locations, it was determined that the selected views from the Wakefield Road / Old Mill Lane / Burton Road (Vp1) and from the public footpath off Rotherham (Vp2) provide appropriate, and clearer, representative views from these locations. |
| Old Mill Lane / Victoria Road | The view looking east towards the proposed development site from the junction of Old Mill Lane and Victoria Road was considered as a potential middle-range view of the site. Upon visit to the site, it was determined that the proposed development would not be visible from this point due to a significant drop in levels from the viewpoint to the site, as well as intervening development, particularly the Barnsley College building. |
| Barnsley Town Hall | The view looking east towards the proposed development site down Regent Road from Barnsley Town Hall was considered as a potential middle-range view of the site. Upon visit to the site, it was determined that the proposed development would not be visible from this point due to intervening development. |

# 5.0 Potential Effects

## 5.1 Embedded Mitigation

5.1.1 Appropriate mitigation methods have been explored to eliminate, minimise or manage identified potential significant visual effects. Embedded mitigation measures relevant to this assessment are the choice of materials for the MSCP, and the fixing of development parameters for the outline (residential) elements of the scheme. This Visual Impact Assessment also assumes the implementation of construction best practice including the installation of suitable site hoarding, careful siting and management of materials stockpiles and the sensitive siting of site welfare and other temporary structures.

## 5.2 Development Parameters Assessed

5.2.1 The main elements of the proposed development which are likely to affect the surrounding views are as follows:

- Multi-storey car park (6 storeys above ground, 386 no. spaces);
- Active travel hub (479 sqm), public realm and access; and
- Two residential blocks on Plots 1 and 2, up to 4 and 5 storeys in height respectively.

5.2.2 The development parameters include elements of the scheme which are submit for full and outline planning permission. The MSCP and the Active Travel Hub are submitted for full planning application and the parameters assessed are of the proposed design. The two residential blocks are submitted for outline planning permission and the parameters assessed are the parameters of the outline planning application. The final development likely to come forward at the reserved matters stage is likely to have a lesser visual impact than the full outline parameters. However, we have assessed the outline parameters as the likely worst case scenario.

## 5.3 Phasing

5.3.1 The Visual Impact Assessment does not consider any potential phasing of the development. The indicative arrangement plan used to inform the Visual Impact Assessment is the likely maximum extent of development. The Visual Impact Assessment does not assess phases of construction or interim phases of operation. Any likely visual effects of phased construction and operation will be of a lesser scale and significance than those assessed and reported in this VIA.

## 5.4 During Construction

5.4.1 The effects of the construction phase have been assessed based on typical construction methodologies for large buildings and the information presented in the Framework CEMP.

5.4.2 The construction effects on views will be temporary and are limited to effects such as the presence of large machinery, cranes, materials shortage and site accommodation.

5.4.3 The most significant visual effects associated with the construction process will be the presence of cranes, construction compounds and materials shortage. The presence of such temporary structures is inevitable in connection with construction of the type and scale envisaged. This temporary situation is common as a consequence of building activity and there is no practical way of avoiding it, nor is it an unusual view, and is commonly experience for town centre developments.

5.4.4 As such, the proposed development will result in a temporary, **minor adverse** effect upon views to the site.

| Receptor | Magnitude of Change | Attribute of Change | Nature of Effect | Recommendation and Mitigation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| All visual receptors | Minor | Adverse | Direct and short-term | Implementation of Construction Best Practice |

## 5.5 During Operation

*Representative Viewpoint 1*

5.5.1 The image presented on Page 7 of Appendix 1 illustrates the view of the proposed development.

5.5.2 The proposed development would be located in a distant view. The view looks across the Dearne River Valley, with the development site at an elevated position in the skyline. The viewpoint is a low sensitivity receptor and is incidental to the viewer.

5.5.3 Elements of the proposed development form a minor component within the view and is generally indistinguishable from the baseline condition of the view due to the fact that it falls within a 'tall buildings cluster' within Barnsley Town Centre. The proposed development will not introduce features which break or fundamentally alter the skyline, but there will be an increase in massing due to the presence of the multi-storey car park and residential blocks which are visible in the view.

5.5.4 The Active Travel Hub is entirely screened by the landscape and intervening development and therefore has no impact on the view.

5.5.5 The proposed development will form a minor component in the overall visible landscape and may not have any apparent influence or the receptor or negative influence on the perceived quality of the view due to the context within which the proposed development falls.

5.5.6 Based on the above assessment, the magnitude of change is therefore considered to be low.

5.5.7 Combining all of these criteria, and considering the descriptions outlined in Section 3, it is considered that there will be a Minor Adverse level of effect which is not considered to be significant.

| Representative Viewpoint | Receptor and Visual Sensitivity | Magnitude of Change | Significance of Effect | Nature of Effect |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VP1 | Road and Footpath Users<br><br>Low | Minor | Minor Adverse | Direct, Permanent |

*Representative Viewpoint 2*

5.5.8 The image presented on Page 11 of Appendix 1 illustrates the view of the proposed development.

5.5.9 The proposed development would be located in a distant view. The view looks across the Dearne River Valley and Dearne Valley Park, with the development site (and wider Barnsley Town Centre) at an elevated position in the skyline. The viewpoint is a medium sensitivity receptor and is incidental to the viewer.

5.5.10 Elements of the proposed development form a minor component within the view and it is generally indistinguishable from the baseline condition of the view due to the fact that it falls within a 'tall

buildings cluster' within Barnsley Town Centre. The proposed development will not introduce features which break or fundamentally alter the skyline, but there will be an increase of massing which impacts the overall view of the town centre form this receptor.

5.5.11 From this view, the residential blocks sit in front of the existing town centre and are therefore more visible that from VP1, however, in the context of the DMC01 and Barnsley College buildings, their presence will not alter the character of the skyline or appreciation of the view.

5.5.12 A small portion of the Active Travel Hub is visible however the majority of the building is screened by the landscape and intervening development and therefore has a negligible impact on the overall view.

5.5.13 The proposed development will form a minor component in the overall visible landscape and may not have any apparent influence on the receptor or negative influence on the perceived quality of the view due to the context within which the proposed development falls.

5.5.14 Based on the above assessment, the magnitude of change is therefore considered to be low.

5.5.15 Combining all of these criteria, and considering the descriptions as outlined in Section 3, it is considered that there will be a Minor Adverse level of effect which is not considered to be significant.

| Representative Viewpoint | Receptor and Visual Sensitivity | Magnitude of Change | Significance of Effect | Nature of Effect |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VP2 | Footpath Users / Residents<br><br>Medium | Minor | Minor Adverse | Direct, Permanent |

*Representative Viewpoint 3*

5.5.16 The image presented on Page 15 of Appendix 1 illustrates the proposed view of the development.

5.5.17 The proposed development would be located in the middle-distance view. The view is looking at eye level up Old Mill Lane with the proposed development site located to the rear of existing residential properties and trees in the left hand side of the view. The viewpoint is a low sensitivity receptor and is incidental to the viewer.

5.5.18 The proposed development forms a negligible component within the view and is barely discernible from the baseline conditions as it is largely screened by existing properties along Old Mill Lane and trees which run along the eastern edge of the delivery site. The proposed view illustrates the extent of the development within the view, as well as an outline of where the MSCP building lies behind the tree canopy, which may be somewhat more visible during the winter months.

5.5.19 The other elements of the proposed development, including the Active Travel Hub and residential development blocks would not be at all visible in the view.

5.5.20 The proposed development will form a negligible component in the overall visible landscape and will not have any apparent influence on the receptor or negative influence on the perceived quality of the view due its minimal presence.

5.5.21 Based on the above assessment, the magnitude of change is therefore considered to be negligible.

5.5.22 Combining all of these criteria, and considering the descriptions as outlined in Section 3, it is considered that there will be a Negligible level of effect which is not considered to be significant.

| Representative Viewpoint | Receptor and Visual Sensitivity | Magnitude of Change | Significance of Effect | Nature of Effect |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VP3 | Road / Footpath Users<br><br>Low | Negligible | Negligible | Direct, Permanent |

## 6.0 Mitigation and Monitoring

6.1.1 Given that no potential significant effects have been identified, no mitigation measures or monitoring are proposed.

## 7.0 Summary and Conclusions

7.1.1 This Visual Impact Assessment has provided a detailed assessment of the visual impact of the proposed development on three representative viewpoints, identified in consultation with BMBC. The assessment has identified minor adverse effects on Viewpoints 1 and 2, and a negligible effect on Viewpoint 3, none of which are considered significant.

7.1.2 A summary of operational effects upon the Viewpoints in presented in the table below:

| Viewpoint | Receptor and Visual Sensitivity | Magnitude of Change | Significance of Effect | Nature of Effect |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VP1 | Road / Footpath Users<br><br>Low | Minor | Minor Adverse | Direct, Permanent |
| VP2 | Footpath Users / Residents<br><br>Medium | Minor | Minor Adverse | Direct, Permanent |
| VP3 | Road / Footpath Users<br><br>Low | Negligible | Negligible | Direct, Permanent |

7.1.3 Given that no significant effects have been identified, no mitigation measures or additional monitoring is recommended beyond those which are already embedded into the scheme.