

**Whitchurch Landscape and Visual
Assessment Summary**
August 2013

Whitchurch Landscape and Visual Assessment Summary

Contents

Landscape and visual assessment summary	Page 3
Appendix 1 Whitchurch Landscape and Visual Assessment	Page 5
Appendix 2 & 3 (Combined) Areas A –F Photographic Viewpoints	
Location of Assessment Areas Map – W1	
Assessment Summary Map – W2	

Whitchurch Landscape and Visual Assessment Summary

1.0 Introduction

1.0.1 Refer to Map W1 – Whitchurch: Location of Assessment Areas

1.1 Methodology

1.1.1 This assessment has been carried out in accordance with the Guide to Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition. The assessment is necessarily general given the hypothetical nature of any development at this early stage of assessment and the broad areas of search. Scoring for sensitivity, magnitude and significance of effects is based on a simple scale of low, low to medium, medium, medium to high and high; and negative, neutral and positive. Where areas are particularly large and complex it has not been possible to assess each and every landscape element and visual receptor individually. Where appropriate representative views have been assessed and landscape elements grouped. The full assessment for each area A, B, C & D, E, F is included in Appendix 1

1.2 Nature of possible development:

1.2.1 The development assessed residential development. Since there is currently no detailed information available, this assessment has assumed a hypothetical 2 Storey, medium to high density housing development in order to gauge development effects.

2.0 Assessment Summary

2.1 The impact of development on the landscape itself and on views to and from the areas assessed is measured as significance using the GLVIA methodology. Therefore a highly negative impact is therefore of high negative significance. The following table summarises the significance scores for landscape and visual impacts as well as giving a combined impact for each area. Combined scores reflects the higher significance scores where these vary slightly

Whitchurch Areas	Landscape Significance Score	Visual Significance Score	Combined Significance Score
A	Varies over site from N/NE – S/SW: Medium → Medium to High → High. All Negative	High Negative (Medium in N/NE)	High Negative (Medium in N/NE)
B	High Negative	High Negative	High Negative
C & D	Medium to High Negative	Medium Negative	Medium to High Negative
E	Varies over site from W - E/SE: Medium → Medium to High → High. All Negative	Varies over site from W - E/SE: Medium → Medium to High → High. All Negative	Varies over site from W - E/SE: Medium → Medium to High → High. All Negative
F	Medium Negative	Medium Negative	Medium Negative

2.2 Areas scoring high negative significance are those where development is considered inappropriate in terms of impacts on landscape and visual factors. Development is unlikely to be able to be mitigated to effectively improve its acceptability in these areas.

2.3 Areas scoring medium to high negative significance are those where development is considered inappropriate in terms of impacts on landscape and visual factors. Development is

unlikely to be able to be mitigated to effectively improve its acceptability in these areas. However, with very significant design and mitigation measures some limited development may be acceptable.

2.4 Areas scoring medium negative are where development is considered to have a detrimental effect on landscape and visual factors to a moderate degree. Appropriate design and mitigation measures may improve the acceptability of development in these areas.

2.5 Areas A and E are both large and complex and unsurprisingly there are variations in development impact within them. Map W2 (see below) gives a better indication than the table above of how these areas are distributed

2.6 The Areas are shown on Map W 2 – Whitchurch Landscape & Visual Assessment Summary

Appendix 1
Whitchurch Landscape and Visual Assessment

Whitchurch Landscape and Visual Assessment

Introduction

This assessment has been carried out in accordance with the Guide to Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition. The assessment is necessarily general given the hypothetical nature of any development at this early stage of assessment and the broad areas of search. Scoring for sensitivity, magnitude and significance of effects is based on a simple scale of low, low to medium, medium, medium to high and high.

Nature of possible development:

Residential development. Since there is currently no detailed information available, this assessment has assumed a hypothetical 2 Storey, medium to high density housing development in order to gauge development effects.

Limitations to Assessment

The Whitchurch area is large and complex. It has not been possible at this stage to assess fully all the landscape and visual receptors as would be done for a specific site and known development. Representative visual receptors have been selected and landscape receptors have been grouped and assessed in general with key factors being picked out.

Area A – Land East of Maes Knoll

Refer to MapW1 (Whitchurch Areas of Search).

Landscape Assessment

Baseline Description

Area A lies within the Dundry Plateau Character Area as defined in the Rural Landscapes of Bath and North East Somerset ; A landscape Character Assessment SPD.

The area south of Whitchurch is not the typical open and windswept landscape of the Dundry plateau character area although it shares characteristics of geology and geomorphology. Area A is a relatively flat, enclosed patchwork landscape of small to medium pasture fields and some playing fields, tall hedgerows with excellent hedgerow trees, tree groups often formed around old ponds, tree lined stream lines and some good specimen field trees. In addition the line of the old North Somerset railway runs across the site often on embankment forming a notable landscape feature. Just outside the northern boundary of the site is the historically valuable Lions Court Farm and included in the site to the east of the farm are remnants of much smaller strip Lynchet fields. The area lies in the lee of Maes Knoll Hill Fort to the west, itself forming a notable landmark at the end of the much higher Dundry Hills which rise above the plateau and dominate the view from area A. To the north and north east the area is bounded by the edge of the Whitchurch village settlement, to the south and east by similar well treed patchwork countryside and some scattered properties. The immediate north eastern boundary of the area is busy A37 Wells Road and the immediate south eastern boundary is Norton Lane

Landscape Receptors (character and landscape elements)

1. The Landscape Character itself
2. Maes Knoll Hill Fort
3. Hedgerows, Stream lines, Specimen Trees and Old Ponds
4. Disused Railway Line

Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors (combination of value of receptor and its susceptibility to the change caused by the development effect)

1. **Landscape Character**
Value

The landscape quality overall is good and even to the north where it abuts the urban edge it is little affected by urban fringe related deterioration. The area is distinctive, varied and attractive with its patchwork of fields, hedgerows, tree lines and railway route. Views are clearly dominated by the steeply rising Maes knoll to the west. The value of the site character overall is enhanced by its relationship with Maes Knoll Hill Fort and is scored as medium to high

Susceptibility to change

This is a large area and its susceptibility to the effects of development change varies over the site. Close to the urban edge the character is much more influenced by it in terms of built form, activity and noise although it remains an attractive, distinctively and definitely farmed landscape. Further to the south and west the landscape is remote from the Whitchurch settlement and even the presence of playing fields is absorbed into the rural landscape by the extensive hedgerows and trees. The susceptibility ranges on a gradient from medium, to medium – high, to high from north / northeast to south / south west across the area. **Sensitivity** (value + susceptibility)

The Sensitivity varies across the site from medium in the north and North West closest to existing settlement through too high for the majority of the site including that to the east of Church Farm in the north

2. Maes Knoll Hill Fort and Setting

Value

This is an Iron Age hill fort and registered ancient monument. Area A is clearly part of its landscape setting, lying immediately below it and dominated by its presence. There is a context of landscape history and continuity here. The value is high

Susceptibility to change

Clearly the landscape in Area A today is likely to be different to that when the fort was active but throughout history the landscape has been predominantly natural in character rather than urban. Again there is a gradient across the site. The land to the north and east closest to the current urban edge could potentially absorb a certain level of additional development without damage to the overall quality and context of the setting. Much of the area however remains highly susceptible to the effects of development change to the setting of the Hill Fort. Close to the settlement edge the score is therefore medium through to medium to high and negative. Most of the area scores high.

Sensitivity

The Sensitivity varies across the site from medium in the north and north east closest to existing settlement through to high

3. Hedgerows, Stream lines, Specimen Trees and Old Ponds

Value

There are good quality hedgerow and hedgerow trees, tree lined stream lines, tree groups and clumps etc. throughout the site. The western boundary hedgerow marks a parish boundary and is clearly ancient with typical bank and ditch. In the north east corner of the site there is a complexity of remnants of strip lynchet field boundaries and tree lined stream / ditch routes. The value of these features varies individually but the group effect is generally medium to high

Susceptibility to Change

It is difficult to see how many of these features could be incorporated into development without at least loss of context especially in the north east corner where the patchwork of vegetation is complex. Overall the susceptibility to development effects is medium to high

Sensitivity

The Sensitivity overall is medium to high

4. Disused Railway Line

Value

This is the route of the old North Somerset railway and is a prominent landscape feature which cuts across the site from north east to south west and literally cuts it in half. It is embanked more or less throughout and in places the embankment is quite high. It is variously bound by hedgerows, grassed over or covered in scrub and it has only been completely physically absorbed into the landscape in a field adjacent to the A39 road. The value is medium to high

Susceptibility to Change

This is a landscape feature which could easily be enhanced and used as a positive part of any development through thoughtful design. Its susceptibility is medium

Sensitivity

The sensitivity to development change is medium

Overall Landscape Sensitivity score for Area A

Receptors	Sensitivity
Landscape Character	Variable from medium to high
Maes Knoll Hill Fort	Variable from medium to high
Hedgerows, Stream lines, Specimen Trees, Old ponds	Medium to High
Disused Railway Line	Medium

It is not possible to give a simple overall sensitivity for this large area as there is so much variation throughout. However the landscape character and setting of Maes Knoll Hill Fort are given greatest weight and therefore the overall the **Sensitivity of Area A to residential development varies on a gradient from medium in the north / north west through medium to high and then high for the larger part of the site.**

Magnitude of development Effects (function of geographical extent of change caused by development and the scale / size of change)

1. Landscape Character

This is a large site and clearly the magnitude of development effects varies significantly depending on whether the whole area or part is considered for development. Just as for the assessment of sensitivity the magnitude varies across the site according to increasing extent of potential development away from the existing settlement edge. The score is therefore on a gradient from medium in the north / north east through medium to high and then high for the larger part of the site and negative in nature of effects.

2. Maes Knoll Hill Fort and Setting

Just as for the assessment of sensitivity the magnitude varies across the site according to increasing extent of potential development away from the existing settlement edge. The score is therefore on a gradient from medium in the north / north east through medium to high and then high for the larger part of the site and negative in nature of effects.

3. Hedgerows, Stream lines, Specimen Trees and Old Ponds

These are many throughout the site and especially in the north east section. Wherever and how large or small the development the extent and scale of change is at minimum medium to high and largely high. The magnitude is therefore medium to high and negative in nature of effects depending on location and extent of development

4. Disused Railway Line

It is hard to measure magnitude of effect for this feature. If it were to be removed all or in part, through development the magnitude both in terms of geographical extent and scale of change would be high and negative in nature of effects. In contrast if it was protected and enhanced as a walking / cycling route the magnitude would be low and negative in nature of effects

The overall Magnitude of Effects

As with the assessment of sensitivity it is not possible to give a simple overall sensitivity for this large area as there is so much variation throughout. However the landscape character and setting of Maes Knoll Hill Fort are given greatest weight and therefore the overall the **magnitude of development effects of residential development over the site varies on a gradient from medium in the north / north west through medium to high and then high for the larger part of the site and negative in nature of effects.**

Significance of Development Effects (combination of Sensitivity and Magnitude) on Landscape Character and Elements for Area A

Overall the significance score varies on a gradient from medium in the north / north east through medium to high and then high for the larger part of the site.

Visual Impact Assessment

Refer to Appendix 2: Photographic Viewpoints – Areas A-D

Visual Receptors:

1. Views From Maes Knoll Hill Fort
2. Views from PROW users including the Bristol Ramblers South Circular Walk
3. Views from Drivers using the A37 Wells Road and Norton Lane
4. Views from residents of properties along the northern site boundary

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors (combination of value of receptor and its susceptibility to the change caused by the development effect)

1. Views From Maes Knoll Hill Fort

Value

Views from the Hill Fort are extensive and to the east are directly over Area A which is in the immediate foreground and currently provides a natural undeveloped visual setting. The value is high

Susceptibility to Change

Being in the foreground of the view from the hill fort looking east, the susceptibility to change from development is high. Development within area A with the possible exception of the land immediately adjacent to the existing settlement edge, would break up the continuity of rural landscape which extends eastwards as far as the eye can see. Susceptibility is high

Sensitivity

Sensitivity to the effects of housing development is high overall

2. Views from PROW users including the Bristol Ramblers South Circular Walk

Value

There are a number of paths through the area, most are close to the existing settlement edge, one runs along the western site boundary and one crosses the site from west to east forming part of the Bristol Ramblers South Circular Walk. These receptors are likely to be mostly regular users with views of significant duration, their value is medium to high

Susceptibility to Change

The effect of development is to change the patchwork rural view dominated by Maes Knoll to an urban view with limited glimpses of the hill fort, the score is high

Sensitivity

The sensitivity is high

3. Views from Drivers using the A37 Wells Road and Norton Lane

Value

Views from both roads are principally from drivers and are currently limited to fleeting glimpses into the site through vegetation with Maes Knoll providing a visual backdrop. The value is medium

Susceptibility to Change

The susceptibility of the receptors to development change is low to medium

Sensitivity

The sensitivity is medium

4. Views from residents of properties along the northern site boundary

Value

Views are currently over a patchwork of fields and hedgerows. The duration and extent of views is likely to be very variable, their value is medium

Susceptibility to Change

Medium

Sensitivity

Medium

Overall Visual Sensitivity score for Area A

The overall visual sensitivity is weighted towards the more important receptors which are considered to those from Maes Knoll and the footpath users. The overall sensitivity is therefore high and negative in nature although close to the existing developed edge the sensitivity is medium

Magnitude of development Effects (combination of geographical extent of development and the scale / size of change) on visual receptors

1. Views From Maes Knoll Hill Fort

The effects of the geographical extent and scale of development in the view experienced by these receptors is slightly variable depending on extent of the development proposed. However, any development extending beyond the immediate vicinity of the settlement edge would have a disproportionate effect particularly in terms of scale of change. The magnitude is therefore high and negative in nature of effects

2. Views from PROW users including the Bristol Ramblers South Circular Walk

The geographical extent and scale of development in the view experienced by these receptors is high and negative in nature of effects

3. Views from Drivers using the A37 Wells Road and Norton Lane

The geographical extent and scale of development effect in the view experienced by these receptors is low and negative in nature of effects

4. Views from residents of properties along the northern site boundary

The geographical extent and scale of development effect in the view experienced by these receptors is medium to high and negative in nature of effects

Overall Magnitude of Visual Effects Score

The overall score again weighted towards the most important receptors and therefore is high and negative in nature of effects

Significance of Development Effects (combination of Sensitivity and Magnitude) on Visual Receptors

The Overall Significance of development Effects on visual receptors for Area A is high and negative in nature

Area B

Landscape Assessment

Baseline Description

Area B lies within the Dundry Plateau Character Area as defined in the Rural Landscapes of Bath and North East Somerset ; A landscape Character Assessment SPD.

The area south of Whitchurch is not the typical open and windswept landscape of the Dundry plateau character area although it shares characteristics of geology and geomorphology. Area B is a roughly triangular area lying in the fork of the A37 Wells Road and Norton Lane. It is a relatively small, relatively flat, enclosed patchwork landscape of small to medium pasture fields , a short row of houses adjacent Norton Lane, a playground, allotment area and a playing field. There are a number of mostly clipped hedgerows with the exception of those along the site boundaries, close to the row of houses and around part of the playing field where the hedgerows are tall and/or tree screens. The area lies in the lee of Maes Knoll Hill Fort to the northwest, itself forming a notable landmark at the end of the much higher Dundry Hills which rise above the plateau and dominate the view from area A. The eastern boundary of the area is busy A37 Wells Road and the western boundary is Norton Lane the southern boundary runs along the back of a cluster of properties in long well treed gardens.

Landscape Receptors (character and landscape elements)

1. The Landscape Character itself
2. Maes Knoll Hill Fort Setting
3. Hedgerows and Trees

Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors (combination of value of receptor and its susceptibility to the change caused by the development effect)

1. Landscape Character

Value

The landscape quality overall is moderate. The area is not dissimilar to Area A overall although hedges are mostly clipped. Views are clearly dominated by the steeply rising Maes knoll to the northwest. The value of the site character overall is enhanced by its relationship with Maes Knoll Hill Fort and is scored as medium to high

Susceptibility to change

The character of the site reads as a continuum with Area A and is even further from the existing development edge of Whitchurch. The busy activity of cars on the Wells Road acts as a small separator with the similar countryside beyond to the east and ties area B more closely to Area A. Overall the susceptibility to change from development is high

Sensitivity (value + susceptibility)

The sensitivity is scored as high

2. Maes Knoll Hill Fort and Setting

Value

This is an Iron Age hill fort and registered ancient monument. Area B is clearly part of its landscape setting, lying immediately below it to the south east and dominated by its presence. There is a context of landscape history and continuity here. The value is high

Susceptibility to change

As for Area A the area is highly susceptible to the effects of development change to the setting of the Hill Fort especially as it is considerably further from the existing settlement edge the score is high

Sensitivity

The Sensitivity is high

3. **Hedgerows and Trees**

Value

These are variable in quality but where there are trees these are strong landscape features. The value is medium

Susceptibility to change

Medium

Sensitivity

Medium

Overall Landscape Sensitivity score for Area B

Receptors	Sensitivity
Landscape Character	High
Maes Knoll	High
Hedgerows and Trees	Medium

Overall the **Sensitivity of Area B to residential development is high**

Magnitude of development Effects (function of geographical extent of change caused by development and the scale / size of change)

1. **Landscape Character**

This site is very much a continuum of Area A even though separated by Norton Lane. It is also much more distant from the existing settlement edge. The magnitude of development affects both extent and scale of change is high and negative in nature of effects

Maes Knoll Hill Fort and Setting

The magnitude is high and negative in nature of effects

1. **Hedgerows and Trees**

The magnitude is therefore medium to high and negative in nature of effects

The overall Magnitude of Effects of residential development change to landscape character and elements in **Area B is high and negative in nature of effects.**

Significance of Development Effects (combination of Sensitivity and Magnitude) on Landscape Character and Elements for Area B

Overall the significance score is high and negative

Visual Impact Assessment

Refer to Appendix 2: Photographic Viewpoints – Areas A-D

Visual Receptors:

1. Views From Maes Knoll Hill Fort
2. Views from Drivers using the A37 Wells Road and Norton Lane
3. Views from residents of properties within and around the site, users of the adjacent Garden Centre and of the playground, playing Field and Allotments

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors (combination of value of receptor and its susceptibility to the change caused by the development effect)

5. **Views From Maes Knoll Hill Fort**

Value

Views from the Hill Fort are extensive and to the south east are directly over Area B which is in the immediate foreground and currently provides a natural undeveloped visual setting. The value is high

Susceptibility to Change

Being in the foreground of the view from the hill fort looking east, the susceptibility to change from development is high. Susceptibility is high

Sensitivity

Sensitivity to the effects of housing development is high overall

2. Views from Drivers using the A37 Wells Road and Norton Lane

Value

Views from both roads are principally from drivers and vary depending on the amount of hedgerow and tree screening along the roads. They are generally of short duration due to speed Maes Knoll providing a visual backdrop. The value is medium

Susceptibility to Change

The susceptibility of the receptors to development change is low to medium

Sensitivity

The sensitivity is medium

3. Views from residents of properties within and around the site, users of the adjacent Garden Centre and of the playground, playing Field and Allotments

Value

These receptors are variable in nature, from occasional to frequent and short to long duration. Current views are either limited by trees or more open into the pasture fields. Their value is medium

Susceptibility to Change

The effect of development is to radically change views and / or destroy receptors altogether The score is high

Sensitivity

The sensitivity is medium to high with greatest weight being given to the visual setting of Maes Knoll

Overall Visual Sensitivity score for Area B

The overall visual sensitivity is high

Magnitude of development Effects (combination of geographical extent of development and the scale / size of change) on visual receptors

1. Views From Maes Knoll Hill Fort

The magnitude is high and negative in nature of effects

2. Views from Drivers using the A37 Wells Road and Norton Lane

The geographical extent and scale of development effect in the view experienced by these receptors is medium and negative in nature of effects

3. Views from residents of properties within and around the site, users of the adjacent Garden Centre and of the playground, playing Field and Allotments

The geographical extent and scale of development in the view experienced by these receptors high and negative in nature of effects

Overall Magnitude of Visual Effects Score

The overall score is high and negative in nature of effects

Significance of Development Effects (combination of Sensitivity and Magnitude) on Visual Receptors for Area B

The Overall Significance of development Effects on visual receptors for Area B is high and negative in nature

Areas C and D – Land Between A37, Woollard Lane and Queen Charlton Lane

Landscape Assessment

Baseline Description

Areas C and D lie within the Dundry Plateau Character Area as defined in the Rural Landscapes of Bath and North East Somerset ; A landscape Character Assessment SPD.

Areas C and D are small elongated triangular areas sandwiched between roads, coming to a point at the junction with the A37. Area C is a particularly narrow area with one small field between each road. The lanes as well as the main road are very well used especially at rush hour. The land slopes very gently and comprises small pasture fields predominantly. Area C includes the small Whitchurch Cemetery separating the narrowest, most enclosed, northern third of the area from more open southern part and Area D has a cluster of properties at its southern end. In character the areas are intermediate between the patchwork well treed landscape of Area A and the more typical open landscape of the Dundry plateau. Generally hedges are clipped and quite tall but some are grown out especially in the north of area C and along the boundaries of the A37 and Queen Charlton Lane

Queen Charlton Lane is distinctively tree lined and shaded as the trees generally arch overhead.

Landscape Receptors (character and landscape elements)

1. The Landscape Character itself
2. Queen Charlton Lane
3. Hedges and trees
4. Cemetery

Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors (combination of value of receptor and its susceptibility to the change caused by the development effect)

1. Landscape Character

Value

This is medium quality, rural, plateau landscape typical of the Dundry plateau overall, The value is medium

Susceptibility to change

Both areas feel rural in character and bear no obvious relationship with the settlement of Whitchurch village even with the small cluster of properties at the southern end of area D and the busy roads. The cemetery appears rather incongruous in the landscape of Area C. Development here would bring a complete change and be particularly incongruous unless in the context of development on the land in Area E. However to an extent the medium quality, small and overall enclosed nature of the landscape makes it potentially robust and able to absorb development without much impact on the wider character area. The score for susceptibility is therefore medium

Sensitivity (value + susceptibility)

Medium

2. Queen Charlton Lane

Value

The lane has a distinctive and attractive, enclosed and tree lined character. The value is medium to high

Susceptibility to change

Development potentially either side of the Lane would put a lot of pressure on the retention and integrity of this character. The susceptibility to development effect is medium to high

Sensitivity

The sensitivity is medium to high

3. Hedges and Trees

Value

These are variable in nature and quality, some clipped and some grown out. Overall the condition is moderate. The value is medium

Susceptibility to Change

The susceptibility to development change is medium – it is highly unlikely that all would be retained.

Sensitivity

Sensitivity to the effects of housing development is medium overall

4. Cemetery

Value

This is a distinctive and surprising feature in the landscape. The value as a landscape element is medium – there are some good trees but the cemetery at the same time introduces a slightly suburban feel into an otherwise agricultural landscape

Susceptibility to Change

The susceptibility to development change is low – it is unlikely that as consecrated ground this could be developed and it is robust in terms of the effects of development adjacent to it

Sensitivity

Sensitivity to the effects of housing development is low to medium overall

Overall Landscape Sensitivity score for Areas C and D

Receptors	Sensitivity
Landscape Character	Medium
Queen Charlton Lane	Medium to high
Hedgerows and trees	Medium
Cemetery	Low to medium

Overall the landscape sensitivity of Areas C and D is considered to be medium

Magnitude of development Effects (function of geographical extent of change caused by development and the scale / size of change)

1. Landscape Character

The potential effects of geographical extent and scale of change from development in these areas is undoubtedly high although in the wider context of similar landscape character the magnitude effect is somewhat tempered. The score is medium to high and negative in nature of effects

2. Queen Charlton Lane

The effects of geographical extent of development change in particular are relevant here. The magnitude of effects is medium and negative in nature of effects as only a portion of the overall lane is affected

3. Hedgerows and Trees

Magnitude is medium and negative in nature of effects

4. Cemetery

The magnitude is low and negative in nature of effects

The overall Magnitude of Effects of residential development change to landscape character and elements in Areas C and D is rather variable. However the effect on landscape character is given most weight and the score is considered medium to high and negative in nature of effects

Significance of Development Effects (combination of Sensitivity and Magnitude) on Landscape Character and Elements for Areas C and D is Medium to high and negative

Visual Impact Assessment

Refer to Appendix 2: Photographic Viewpoints – Areas A-D

Visual Receptors:

1. Views from road users
2. Views from residents of properties and Cemetery visitors

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors (combination of value of receptor and its susceptibility to the change caused by the development effect)

1. Views from Road Users

Value

These are fleeting glimpsed views over hedges and through gateways currently to the grazed fields and beyond to tree lined hedgerows bordering roads. The overall nature of view is rural. The score is medium

Susceptibility to Change

The nature of the views would change significantly and be more visible over any clipped hedges as well as presenting a much more urban road boundary as a view. The susceptibility score is medium

Sensitivity

Sensitivity to the effects of housing development is medium and negative in nature

2. Views from residents of properties and Cemetery visitors

Value

These receptors are variable in terms of frequency, duration and extent of view. Their current view is rural and attractive. The value is considered medium

Susceptibility to Change

The effect of development is to change the character of these views. The score is considered medium

Sensitivity

The sensitivity is medium

Overall Visual Sensitivity score for Areas C and D

Medium

Magnitude of development Effects (combination of geographical extent of development and the scale / size of change) on visual receptors

1. Views from Road Users
The magnitude is medium and negative in nature of effects
2. Views from residents and Cemetery visitors
The magnitude is medium and negative in nature of effects

Overall Magnitude score for Areas C and D

The overall score is medium and negative in nature of effects

Significance of Development Effects (combination of Sensitivity and Magnitude) on Visual Receptors in Areas C and D

The Overall Significance of development Effects on visual receptors for Areas C and D is medium to high and negative in nature

Area E – Land around Horse World

Landscape Assessment

Baseline Description

Area E lies within two Character Areas, most of the area is in the Dundry Plateau Character Area and a small section in north east is in the Stockwood Vale Character Area as defined in the Rural Landscapes of Bath and North East Somerset ; A landscape Character Assessment SPD. This is a large area which varies considerably in character. The land in the south western quarter of the site, to the south of the track which runs west to east by the Horse World entrance is very distinctive and entirely uncharacteristic of the Dundry Plateau character. It comprises very small, narrow remnant strip lynchet fields now used as paddocks. The hedges are tall and grown out and when viewed from the top of Maes Knoll the area appears to be woodland because of the density of vegetation. Here in amongst the paddocks are various buildings and along the track are a range of barns, business uses and homes most with well treed narrow grounds. Elsewhere in both the Dundry and Stockwood Vale areas the landscape is more similar to the well treed patchwork of small to medium fields found in Area A. The fields are all grazing and used for horses apart from the large sports ground adjacent to Stockwood Lane. The land is in good condition and many of the hedgerows especially around the larger fields are excellent with large hedgerow trees. The area is bounded by Stockwood Lane and the settlement edges of Stockwood and Whitchurch villages to the north west; to the south by Queen Charlton Lane and enclosed plateau countryside of Area D; and to the east by the countryside of Charlton Bottom valley and the open landscape vistas across to Queen Charlton and beyond to the Cotswold ridge.

Landscape Receptors (character and landscape elements)

1. The Landscape Character itself
2. The Strip Lynchet Fields and Hedgerows
3. Hedgerows and trees

Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors (combination of value of receptor and its susceptibility to the change caused by the development effect)

1. Landscape Character

Value

This is attractive and high quality countryside in very good condition with very distinctive character particularly associated with the tiny strip lynchets fields. There is no obvious evidence of urban fringe degradation even with the intensity of use of Horse World and the proximity of the settlement edge. The value is medium to high

Susceptibility to change

Because this is such a large area and is variable in character, its susceptibility to the effects of development change is also variable. The area least susceptible is that north of the strip Lynchets fields and adjacent to Area F. This land is most influenced by the settlement edge and furthest from the edge of the plateau. This area is scored as medium. The rest of the area scores medium to high, through to high closest to the edge of the plateau and into the strip Lynchets fields.

Sensitivity (value + susceptibility)

The sensitivity varies from medium to high to high over the area from west to east and south

2. The Strip Lynchets Fields and their Hedgerows

Value

This is a highly distinctive remnant medieval landscape. The numerous tall grown out hedgerows and hedgerow trees are very variable in condition and quality but overall give a distinctly wooded effect when viewed from Maes Knoll. The value is medium to high

Susceptibility to change

This old landscape is very susceptible to change. The fields are so small and the hedgerows so many that the integrity of the area would inevitably be lost in development. However some of the hedgerows are in poor condition and quality and there is limited potential for the well treed landscape to absorb some development and still retain a wooded feel. The medieval field pattern would still be lost however. Susceptibility to development effect is medium to high

Sensitivity

The sensitivity is medium to high

3. Hedgerows and Trees (excluding Strip Lynchets area)

Value

These are generally excellent quality and in very good condition. The majority are very tall and there are many excellent very large hedgerow trees. Overall the value is high

Susceptibility to Change

The susceptibility to development change is medium to high. The fields are generally large enough to accommodate development whilst still retaining the best hedgerows through sensitive design. However to do so would no doubt reduce housing numbers

Sensitivity

The sensitivity is medium to high

Overall Landscape Sensitivity score for Area E

Receptors	Sensitivity
Landscape Character	Medium to high through to high
The Strip Lynchets Fields and hedgerows	Medium to high
Hedgerows and trees	Medium to high

Overall the landscape sensitivity of Area E varies over the site from medium to high to high moving west to east over the site

Magnitude of development Effects (function of geographical extent of change caused by development and the scale / size of change)

1. Landscape Character

The geographical extent and scale of development effects clearly will vary depending on the location and extent of any potential development. Overall the magnitude score is similar to that for sensitivity being medium closest to Stockwood Lane and north of the Strip Lynchet fields through medium to high to high towards the east and south east and negative in nature of effects

2. The Strip Lynchet Fields and their Hedgerows

The scale of change in particular would be high and negative in nature of effects here

3. Hedgerows and Trees (excluding Strip Lynchet Fields)

The magnitude effects are medium to high and negative in nature of effects

Overall Magnitude score for Area E

The overall score is medium through to high and negative in nature of effects from west to east and south east

Significance of Development Effects (combination of Sensitivity and Magnitude) on Landscape Receptors in Area E

The Overall Significance of development Effects on landscape receptors for Area E is variable, from medium to high in the west to high in the east and south east and negative in nature throughout

Visual Impact Assessment

Refer to Appendix 3: Photographic Viewpoints – Areas E-F

Visual Receptors:

1. Medium to long distance views from Queen Charlton plateau, including golf course users and footpath users
2. Medium to long distance views from Maes Knoll
3. Views from PROW users within the site area
4. Views from residents and businesses within the site area
5. Views from residents of Stockwood and Whitchurch village abutting the area
6. Views from Stockwood Lane and Queen Charlton Lane

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors (combination of value of receptor and its susceptibility to the change caused by the development effect) in relation to Area E

1. **Medium to long distance views from Queen Charlton plateau, including golf course users and footpath users**

Value

Currently there are attractive views from a limited number of receptors across to the site area and in very few places there are glimpses of settlement edge of Stockwood and Whitchurch. The value is medium to high

Susceptibility to Change

Development would potentially bring the settlement edge much closer to the edge of the plateau and much more prominently into view. The susceptibility to development change is medium to high.

Sensitivity

Development would potentially bring the settlement edge much closer to the edge of the plateau and much more prominently into view. The sensitivity is medium to high **Medium to long distance views from Maes Knoll**

Value

Currently there are attractive views over to the site. The predominant impression of the views is of woodland. The value is medium to high

Susceptibility to Change

Development would potentially bring radical change to the view. The susceptibility to development change is medium to high.

Sensitivity

Sensitivity is medium to high

2. Views from PROW users within the site area



Viewpoint 4

Value

There are currently attractive views across fields to excellent hedgerows and large hedgerow trees. Views are generally limited in extent by hedgerows until the land begins to slope away to the Charlton Bottom valley where views out to the Queen Charlton plateau and beyond to the Cotswolds open up. The valley is medium to high

Susceptibility to Change

The susceptibility to change from development is medium to high through to high from west to east across the site

Sensitivity

Sensitivity is medium to high through to high

3. Views from residents and businesses within the site area

Value

These are low to medium in value as most are separated from the site by long gardens and vegetation

Susceptibility to Change

Given their relative protection from the effects of development on their views, the susceptibility is low

Sensitivity

The sensitivity is low to medium

4. Views from residents of Stockwood and Whitchurch village abutting the area

Value

The nature, duration and extent of views from these receptors are very variable. Generally the views are limited in extent by garden vegetation or hedgerows within the site. Duration is dependent on activity of residents. The value is medium

Susceptibility to Change

The susceptibility to change is also variable but overall is scored as medium and negative

Sensitivity

The sensitivity is medium

5. Views from Stockwood Lane and Queen Charlton Lane

Value

These are generally few, fleeting and glimpsed through vegetation and gateways or gaps between properties. The value is low to medium

Susceptibility to Change

This is variable but overall assessed as medium

Sensitivity

The sensitivity is medium

Overall Visual Sensitivity score for Area E

Medium to high

Magnitude of development Effects (combination of geographical extent of development and the scale / size of change) on visual receptors

1. **Medium to long distance views from Queen Charlton plateau, including golf course users and footpath users**

The magnitude is scored as medium and negative in nature of effects

2. **Medium to long distance views from Maes Knoll**

The magnitude is scored as medium and negative in nature of effects

3. **Views from PROW users within the site area**

The magnitude is scored as medium to high increasing to high and negative in nature of effects the further east the development extends away from existing settlement

4. **Views from residents and businesses within the site area**

The magnitude is low and negative in nature of effects

5. **Views from residents of Stockwood and Whitchurch village abutting the area**

The magnitude is medium and negative in nature of effects

6. **Views from Stockwood Lane and Queen Charlton Lane**

The magnitude is low to medium and negative in nature of effects

Overall Magnitude of Visual Effects Score for Area E

The overall score medium and negative in nature of effects

Significance of Development Effects (combination of Sensitivity and Magnitude) on Visual Receptors in Area E

The Overall Significance of development Effects on visual receptors for Area E is medium to high and negative in nature

Area F – Land Between Whitchurch and Stockwood west of Stockwood Lane Landscape Assessment

Baseline Description

Area F lies in the Dundry Plateau Character Area as defined in the Rural Landscapes of Bath and North East Somerset ; A landscape Character Assessment SPD.

This is a small gently sloping area set in between the settlement edges of Stockwood and Whitchurch comprising a few small to medium grazed fields bounded by tall grown out hedgerows one of which has particularly good trees. The area is criss-crossed by public footpaths running between the two settlements. The condition of the landscape is moderate, reflecting to an extent deterioration from urban fringe effects. There are significant views over the site to the west towards Maes Knoll and the Dundry Hills. Whilst the Stockwood edge is clearly visible in views from footpaths, the Whitchurch edge is more hidden down behind vegetation

Landscape Receptors (character and landscape elements)

1. The Landscape Character itself
2. Hedgerows and trees

Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors (combination of value of receptor and its susceptibility to the change caused by the development effect) in Area F

1. **Landscape Character**

Value

The character is surprisingly rural considering the proximity of the settlements around such a small area. The fields closest to the Stockwood settlement edge are more dominated by it than those adjacent to Whitchurch. The value is medium

Susceptibility to change

The area is tucked in between Stockwood and Whitchurch and the susceptibility to development change in relation to the wider Dundry Hills character area is undoubtedly low. However this rural landscape acts to maintain separation Stockwood from Whitchurch and development here would potentially merge the two at least in this location. Overall the susceptibility is medium

Sensitivity (value + susceptibility)

The sensitivity is medium

2. Hedgerows and Trees

Value

The value is medium

Susceptibility to change

the susceptibility is medium

Sensitivity (value + susceptibility)

The sensitivity is medium

Overall Landscape Sensitivity score for Area F

Receptors	Sensitivity
Landscape Character	Medium
Hedgerows and trees	Medium

Overall the landscape sensitivity of Area F is medium

Magnitude of development Effects (function of geographical extent of change caused by development and the scale / size of change)

1. Landscape Character

The geographical extent and scale of development effects is high in relation to the site itself but low in relation to the wider Dundry area. The magnitude is therefore scored as medium and negative in nature of effects

2. Hedgerows and Trees

The magnitude is medium and negative in nature of effects

Overall Magnitude score for Area F

The overall score is medium and negative in nature of effects

Significance of Development Effects (combination of Sensitivity and Magnitude) on Landscape Receptors in Area F

The Overall Significance of development Effects on landscape receptors for Area F is medium and negative in nature

Visual Impact Assessment

Refer to Appendix 3: Photographic Viewpoints – Areas E-F

Visual Receptors:

1. Users of PROWs
2. Road Users and pedestrians along Stockwood Lane
3. Residents of adjacent properties

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors (combination of value of receptor and its susceptibility to the change caused by the development effect)

1. Users of PROWs

Value

There are several footpaths and they seem to be well used. Currently the views are attractive and generally rural though with some urban influence, with excellent views across to the Dundry Hills. Views are generally of significant duration and extent. The value is medium

Susceptibility to change

the susceptibility to the effects of development on these visual receptors is medium to high

Sensitivity (value + susceptibility)

The sensitivity is medium to high

2. Road Users and pedestrians along Stockwood Lane

Value

Views are open to the site along some distance although the overall experience of road users looking west here is of relatively poor quality development. The value is low to medium overall

Susceptibility to change

the susceptibility is low to medium

Sensitivity (value + susceptibility)

The sensitivity is low to medium

3. Residents of adjacent properties

Value

The value is low to medium

Susceptibility to change

the susceptibility is medium

Sensitivity (value + susceptibility)

The sensitivity is medium

Overall Visual Sensitivity score for Area F

Overall the visual sensitivity of Area F is medium

Magnitude of development Effects (function of geographical extent of change caused by development and the scale / size of change)

1. Users of PROWs

The magnitude is medium to high and negative in nature of effects

2. Road Users and pedestrians along Stockwood Lane

The magnitude is low to medium and negative in nature of effects

3. Residents of adjacent properties

The magnitude is low and negative in nature of effects

Overall Magnitude score for Area F

The overall score is medium and negative in nature of effects

Significance of Development Effects (combination of Sensitivity and Magnitude) on Visual Receptors in Area F

The Overall Significance of development Effects on visual receptors for Area F is medium and negative in nature

Appendix 2
Whitchurch
Areas A –D Photographic Viewpoints
(All photographs taken August 2013)

Refer to Map W3 A-D

Viewpoint 1



Panorama from Maes Knoll looking north east to east over Area A – D with Area E beyond Area A (left of centre in photo)

Viewpoint A2



Panorama looking north west towards Maes Knoll from PROW immediately to north west of Area A

Viewpoint A3



Panorama looking north east over Area A from PROW

Viewpoint A4



View looking south east over Area A towards disused railway line from PROW

Viewpoint A5



Panorama looking north west over Area A towards Lion's Court Farm from PROW

Viewpoint A6



Panorama looking north east over Area A towards A37 road

Viewpoint B2



Panorama looking south east into Area B from Garden Centre overflow Car Park

Viewpoint C2



Panorama looking over Whitchurch Cemetery towards southeast of Area C

Viewpoint C3



Panorama from Woollard Lane looking west into Area C (A37 is immediately beyond trees)

Viewpoint D2



View from Queen Charlton Lane looking through gateway west towards Area D

Viewpoint D3



View along Queen Charlton Lane with Area D on right

Appendix 3
Whitchurch
Areas E-F Photographic Viewpoints
Refer to Map W3 E-F
(All photographs taken August 2013)

Viewpoint E1



View over Horse World Car Park into Area E

Viewpoint E2



Panorama from Queen Charlton Lane looking north into Area E

Viewpoint E3



Panorama from Queen Charlton Lane looking north over Area E

Viewpoint E4



Panorama looking north from PROW within Area E

Viewpoint E5



Panorama looking north from PROW within Area E

Viewpoint E6



Panorama looking East to Queen Charlton in middle distance and beyond to Cotswold Hills

Viewpoint E7



Panorama looking north east out of Area E

Viewpoint E8



Panorama looking west and north west towards Area E from track west of Queen Charlton

Viewpoint E9



Panorama looking west from PROW adjacent to Stockwell Vale Golf Course towards Area E on skyline

Viewpoint F1

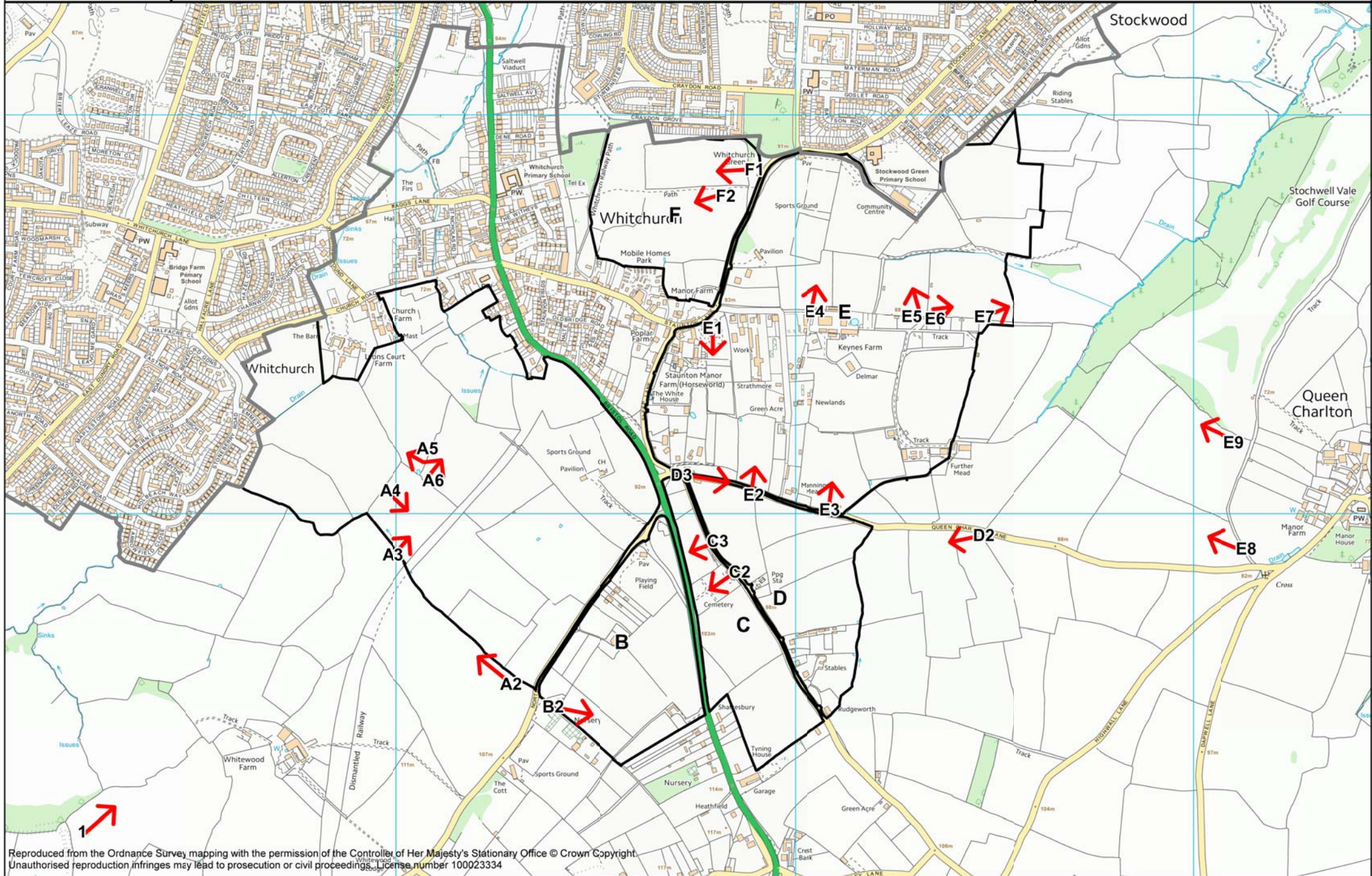


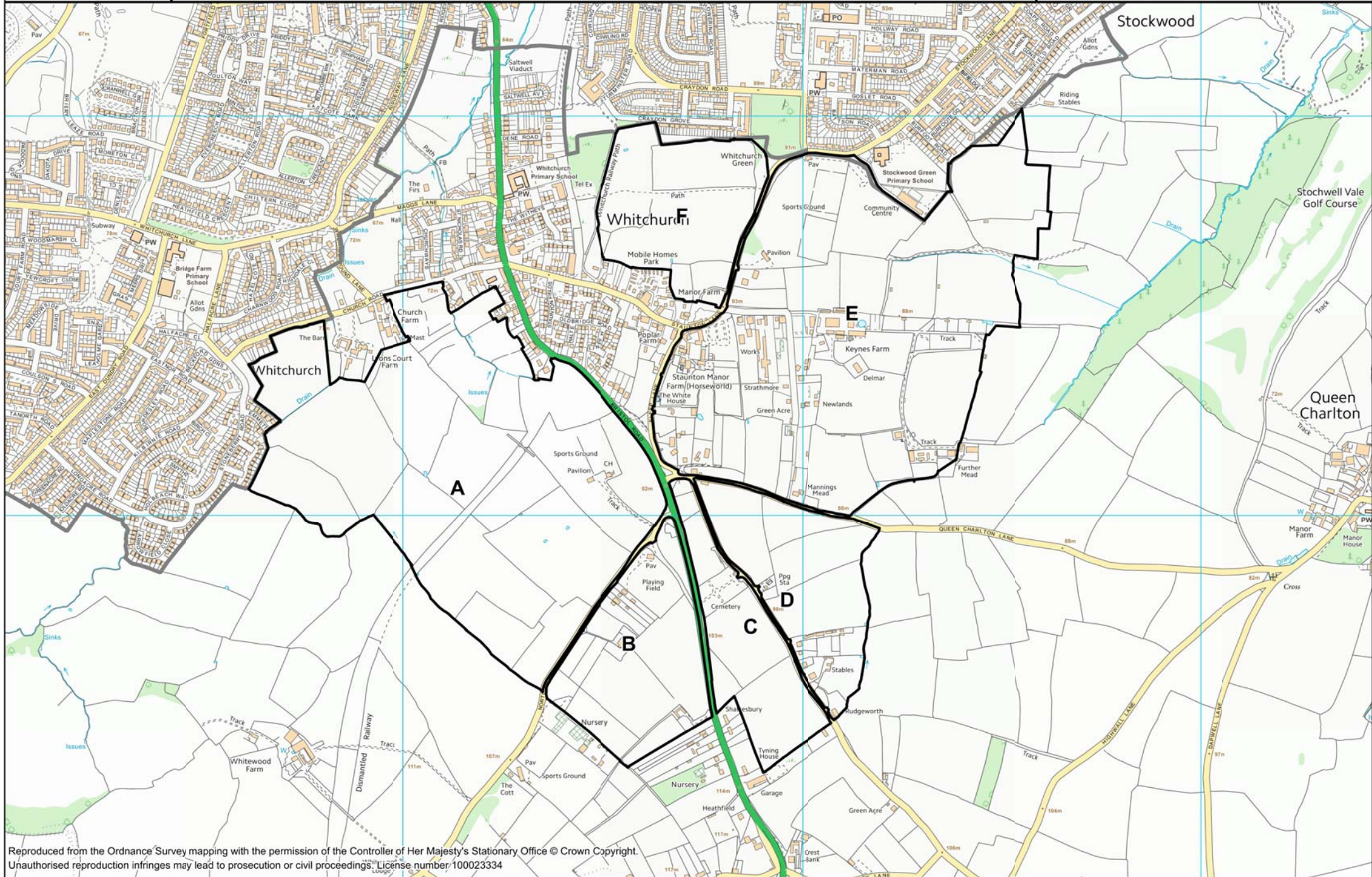
Panorama from adjacent Stockwood Lane looking west over Area F

Viewpoint F2



Panorama from PROW within Area F looking west over site towards Dundry Hills in distance





Landscape & Visual Assessment Summary

Map W2: Whitchurch - Assessment Summary (1:12,000)

