

Bath & North East Somerset Council:
Whitchurch Strategic Development Location

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

This body of work comprises a series of landscape and visual impact assessments, and was commissioned to inform the proposed allocation of land, primarily for housing, in the Whitchurch area of Bath and North East Somerset Council. It forms part of the evidence base to inform both the Joint Spatial Plan produced by the West of England, and the more detailed Local Plan (2016-2036) produced by Bath and North East Somerset Council, and earlier phases were used to inform the B&NES Core Strategy.

The body of work comprises:

- Whitchurch Strategic Development Location 2017 - Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- The HELAA Review 2016 – Whitchurch Landscape and Visual Assessment (Appendix 1)
- The Core Strategy Green Belt Review 2013/14 - Whitchurch Landscape and Visual Assessment Summary (Appendix 2)

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Whitchurch Strategic Development Location 2017 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This is an update to previous LVIAs carried out for a similar area of land as part of the HEELA Review 2016/17 (Appendix 1 – Whitchurch Section of HELAA Review 2106) and the earlier Core Strategy Green Belt Allocation Work in 2013/14 for Whitchurch (Appendix 2). This work assesses impacts of medium to high density 2 storey housing (average 50dph), low density housing (average 15dph).

1.2 The previous assessments were reviewed. Taken together the two previous assessments were both thorough with the HEELA review, identifying small changes to the significance of effects in the area around St. Nicholas Church and Lions Court Farm; and looking for the first time at land closer to Queen Charlton.

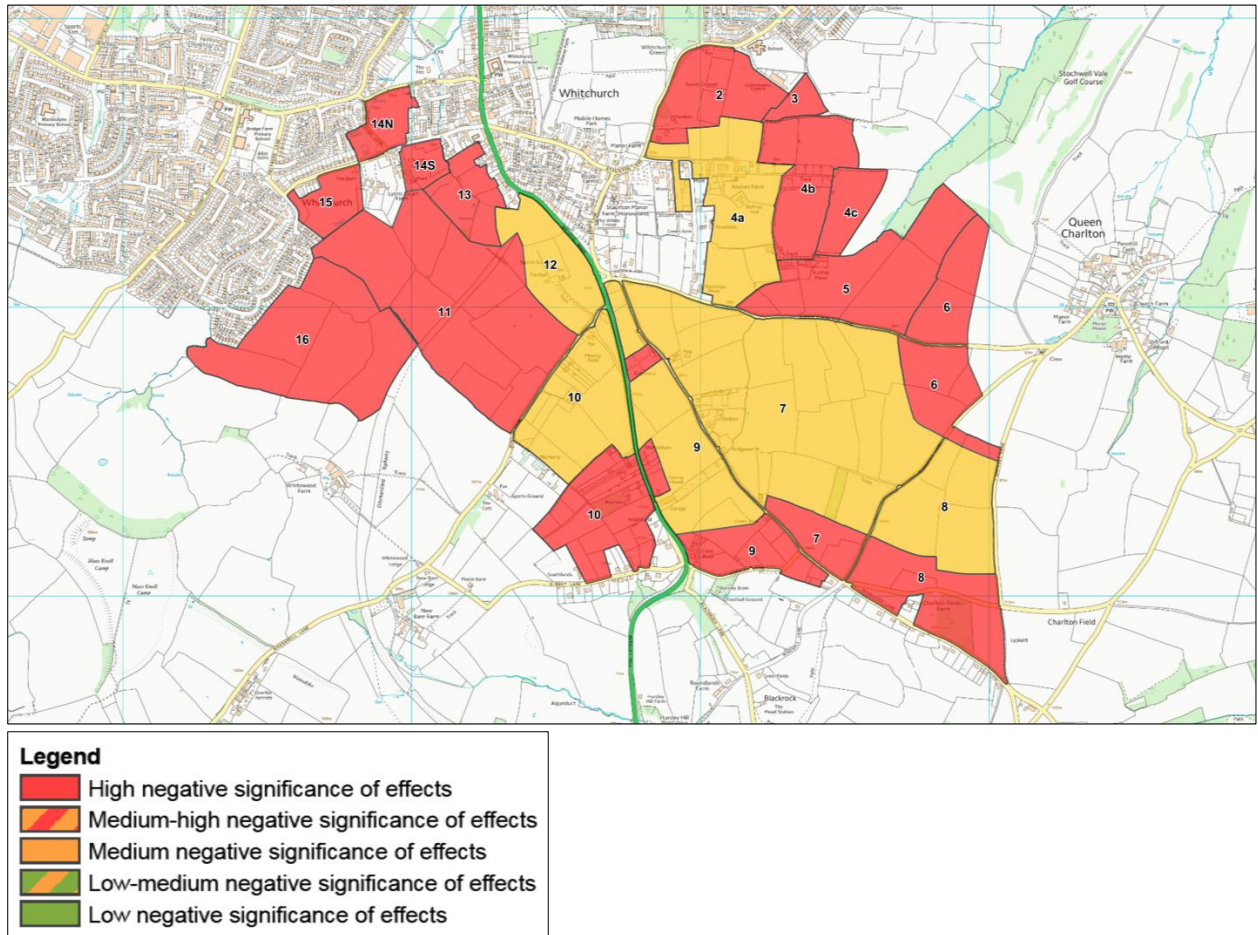
1.3 Subsequent to the document review it was decided that a further visual assessment should be carried out to fill in gaps identified towards Queen Charlton and also at Maes Knoll to re-assess the visual setting of the Maes Knoll SAM at the far eastern end of Dundry Hill. See separate Photographic Survey document (Appendix 3).

1.4 The outcome of the visual assessment for Maes Knoll suggested that the impact of medium to high density development was likely to be less than previously indicated in two small areas: Area 10 north and Area 8 (numbering is as for HELAA Review 2016). These two areas are reassessed below for landscape and visual impact.

1.5 Both the document review and the additional photographic assessment showed all areas previously assessed as suitable for medium to high density development (shown as medium negative significance of effects - orange, on output map) would also be suitable for low density development and that all other areas, assessed as unsuitable for medium to high density development (shown as high negative significance of effects - red, on output map) would also be unsuitable for low density development being either in the landscape settings of Maes Knoll and Queen Charlton, or visually highly prominent skyline settings associated with the Chew Valley or Stockwood Vale/Charlton Bottom.

See over page for Landscape Assessment Map for Whitchurch SDL.

Map 1: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment - Combined Significance of Development Effects for Whitchurch SDL



2.0 Methodology

2.1 The methodology is as for the previous assessment work and has been carried out in accordance with the Guide to Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment). The assessment is necessarily general given the hypothetical nature of any development. 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 (Appendix 4 gives definitions). The landscape assessment is primarily against landscape character with reference made within that to key landscape elements such as important tree groupings and landform features and including landscape setting to settlements where appropriate as well as Green Infrastructure. The visual assessment is against individual viewpoints and also receptor grouping such as local residents and road users.

The Assessment

Area 10 (Northern half)

3.0 Site Description

3.1 Area 10 (North) is roughly triangular in shape and lies in between Norton Lane (on its north-western side and the A37 (on its eastern side). To the south west it is bounded by Whitehall Garden Centre and the South East, by domestic gardens. The land use comprises a mixture of pasture paddocks, sports pitches and facilities, a group of 4 detached houses in large gardens and a play area at the junction between Norton Lane and the A37. There are some large individual field trees, some clipped and some good grown out hedges as well as a good tree belt separating the play area from the cricket pitch. The land has a very light gradient, dipping very gently towards the north-east. The gas pipeline and easement runs diagonally through the site and would be likely to preclude housing on that basis but could possibly accommodate a park and ride. The landscape and visual assessment has therefore considered both housing and a park and ride as possible uses.

3.2 It is assumed that the existing houses, cricket pitch and play area are excluded from the assessment.

4.0 Landscape Impact Assessment

4.1 Landscape Receptors:

Landscape Character

4.1.1 Area 10 (north) lies within the Dundry Plateau Landscape Character Area on the Lower Lias limestone plateau just to the south east of the eastern end of Dundry Hill and Maes Knoll Hill Fort. The area 10 (north) is typical of well managed urban fringe with a mix of low density houses, paddocks and sports/recreation facilities and as such it is less typical of the overall open and windswept highly rural character of the Dundry Plateau Local Character Area although there are parts of this small area which do present a very open aspect especially in the views across the site from the A37. There is considerable road noise within the site due to the proximity of the A37 and to a lesser extent, Norton Lane.

4.1.2 The immediate surroundings to Area 10 (north) are primarily a pastoral, open landscape with increasing development along the A37 to the north and north east, entering Whitchurch Village and then Bristol. The most important landscape feature in the local landscape is Dundry Hill which rises up steeply to the north-west. At the eastern end of Dundry hill is Maes Knoll Hill Fort a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM). The landscape setting of the SAM is an important aspect of the assessment of the impacts of any development in the area around the hill fort. Being primarily perceived as visual setting it is mainly assessed within the visual impact assessment.

Mature trees, hedgerows and tree belts

4.1.3 There are some very good individual trees, a few very good hedgerows, a mature tree belt and good mature trees along part of the boundary with the A37.

4.2 Assessment of Sensitivity of Landscape receptors

Dundry Plateau Landscape Character (Local character)

4.2.1 As described above, this area has a well managed urban fringe character overall which is not altogether typical of the character of the wider Dundry Hills LCA. The local landscape value is therefore considered to be low to medium.

4.2.2 The susceptibility of area 10 (north) to medium to high density, two storey housing (its ability to accommodate this development without undue consequences to the maintenance of the baseline) is assessed as medium to high. The development within the site is very low density and in small groups adjacent to the roads and well screened by trees. This leaves the inner core of the site as open agricultural land or sports pitches. Clearly medium to high density housing would result in the loss of this open agricultural land and the density of the housing would preclude the introduction of very significant numbers of trees within the development. However, careful design with some strong boundary and internal tree belts and avenues would help integrate housing with the existing low density development.

4.2.3 The susceptibility of this area to a possible park and ride is assessed as medium given strong boundary and internal tree planting making allowance for the location of the gas main.

4.2.4 The **sensitivity** of the **Dundry Plateau local Landscape Character** as a combination of value and susceptibility is assessed as **medium** for both medium to high density housing and for a park and ride.

Mature trees, Hedgerows and Tree Belts

4.2.5 There are a few excellent individual field and hedgerow trees, one particularly good tall hedgerow and an excellent mature tree screen between the cricket pitch and the playground. These merit a value of high

4.2.6 The susceptibility score for these vegetation features is assessed as medium since they are generally located towards the periphery of the area and their protection should be able to be assured whether development was housing or a park and ride.

4.2.7 The **sensitivity** of the **trees, hedgerows and tree belts** as a combination of value and susceptibility, is assessed as **medium to high** for both housing and a park and ride

4.3 Assessment of Magnitude of Landscape effects for Landscape Receptors

4.3.1 Magnitude is assessed in terms of geographical extent of change to the receptors; scale and/or size of change; the duration and reversibility of change

Dundry Plateau local Landscape Character

4.3.2 Development of medium to high density two storey housing with mitigation in area 10 (north) would be set within an area which already has a small amount of low density housing on its edge and an adjacent garden centre. Whilst estate type higher density housing would be a significant change it would be contained within the existing development and trees and would not extend geographically beyond this containment. Two storey development would be of an appropriate scale to the existing. In terms of the local landscape character magnitude of effects in terms of the geographical extent and size/scale of change is assessed as medium overall and would be permanent and not reversible. Similarly magnitude of effect is assessed as medium for a park and ride.

Mature trees, Hedgerows and Tree Belts

4.3.3 Given the peripheral nature of the trees and hedgerows, development of either a park and ride or housing is unlikely to result in much if any loss or change to this vegetation and magnitude is therefore assessed as low

4.4 Significance of Effects of change to Landscape Receptors in Area 10 (north) from Development of Medium to High Density Two Storey Housing or a Park and Ride

4.4.1 Significance of effects combines the assessment scores for sensitivity and magnitude. The significance of effects of either development type in relation to both landscape character and tree/hedgerows is assessed as medium and is negative overall.

5.0 Visual Impact Assessment

5.1 Visual Receptors:

Maes Knoll

5.1.1 This is a well used local beauty spot and Scheduled Ancient Monument with extensive views to the south, east and north. In the assessment of visual impact in relation to Maes Knoll it is important both to assess the impact on visitors to the hill and also on the visual setting of the SAM itself.

Users of Norton Lane and A37

5.1.2 These receptors are mainly car drivers with occasional walkers and horse riders. Cars are generally travelling at some speed on the A37 but more slowly on Norton Lane due to its narrowness. The A37 carries very heavy traffic and Norton Lane is typical of local roads in the area, busier during rush hour generally.

Adjacent residents and users of Garden Centre and sports pitches

5.1.3 The adjacent residents are generally well screened from the possible development area both in their houses or gardens. Garden Centre visitors would see the site from the car park and there would be views from some of the sports pitches (not the Cricket pitch).

5.2 Assessment of Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

Maes Knoll SAM and visitors

5.2.1 The value of this receptor is considered to be high given the nationally important SAM designation and well used nature of receptor viewpoints.

5.2.2 Susceptibility of the receptor to the development of medium-high density housing or a Park & Ride (its ability to accommodate development without undue consequences to the maintenance of the baseline). This is a relatively small area within the view from Maes Knoll and it is in the middle distance. As the eye takes in the views from Maes Knoll, there is the mass of development of Bristol to the north which appears too close to the SAM, not giving it the necessary "breathing space" of open landscape; and then to the north-east is Whitchurch. The edges of Whitchurch form a patchwork of development alternating with vegetation at about the same distance away from the SAM as area 10(north). The existing development edges of Whitchurch are sufficiently far from the monument to provide an attractive pastoral setting around the base of the hill and a harmonious proportionality between the undeveloped and developed landscape and between the height of the monument and the open landscape surrounds. Development in area 10(North) is not considered to interrupt this setting and hence susceptibility is assessed as low to medium for both development types given robust landscape screening and internal landscape allowing for the presence of the gas pipeline.

5.2.3 Sensitivity of the Maes Knoll receptors as a combination of value and susceptibility, is assessed as medium for both development types.

Users of Norton Lane and A37

5.2.4 The value of these receptors is assessed as low to medium - these are receptors with views of brief duration although they be repeated on a daily basis, especially for those using Norton Lane. At least half of the Norton Lane view is screened by trees currently

5.2.5 Susceptibility of effects of both types of development on these receptors is assessed as low to medium given good mitigation of tree belts or avenue trees along roadside boundaries.

5.2.6 Sensitivity of the Norton Lane and A37 receptors as a combination of value and susceptibility, is assessed as low to medium for both development types.

Adjacent residents and users of Garden Centre and sports pitches

5.2.7 The value of these receptors is assessed as low to medium. Views from residential properties are very limited, most sports facility views are well screened and views from the garden centre are primarily from the car park. Most of the receptors are transient in nature.

5.2.8 Susceptibility is assessed as low to medium in relation to both types of development.

5.3 Assessment of Magnitude of Effects for Visual Receptors

5.3.1 Magnitude is assessed in terms of geographical extent of change including distance from receptors, location eg central or peripheral and amount of view affected within the view area; the scale and/or size of change including degree of contrast in nature of view; the duration and reversibility of change.

Maes Knoll SAM and visitors

5.3.2 Given the relatively small area of development in relation to the overall view and the distance from the monument as previously discussed in respect of sensitivity, magnitude of effects is assessed as medium for both types of development.

Users of Norton Lane and A37

5.3.3 Magnitude of effects is assessed as low in relation to both types of development and for both the A37 and Norton Lane users. There are limited open views to the area currently and these would be likely to be reduced further with good mitigation.

Adjacent residents and users of Garden Centre and sports pitches

5.3.4 Magnitude of effects is assessed as low to medium overall in relation to both types of development and for all types of receptor. Given the limited nature of views and their transience, good mitigation should ensure that the scale and extent of development in any views is minimised.

5.4 Significance of Effects of Change to Visual Receptors

5.4.1 Significance of effects combines the assessment scores for sensitivity and magnitude and is set out below as a table for industrial sheds (with and without mitigation)

Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance
Maes Knoll	Medium	Medium	Medium and -ve
Norton Lane & A37	Low to Medium	Low	Low to Medium and -ve
Adjacent residents, garden centre users, sports users	Low to Medium	Low to Medium	Low to Medium and -ve

6.0 Overall Significance of Visual Effects of development (housing or Park and Ride) in Area 10 (North)

6.0.1 The overall significance of effects is considered to be medium and negative taking the views from the Maes Knoll SAM and the visual setting of the SAM as the most important of the receptors.

Area 8

7.0 Site Description

7.0.1 Area 8 consists of three open arable fields overall rectangular in shape with low clipped hedges and possibly some remnant dry stone walling. The fields are bounded by narrow lanes to the east and west and by further fields to the north and south. Less than 0.25km to the south is the row of houses at the Lypiat which overlook the Chew Valley and about 0.5km to the north-east is Queen Charlton village and Conservation Area. There is a very slight fall across the site toward the north.

8.0 Landscape Impact Assessment

8.1 Landscape Receptors:

Landscape Character

8.1.1 Area 8 lies just within the Dundry Plateau Landscape Character Area on the Lower Lias limestone plateau. Less than 0.25km to the south is the Chew Valley LCA and the land falls away steeply down into the valley from the houses at the Lypiat. The fields of Area 8 and the surrounding plateau fields present a semi-open landscape which is quite uniform in nature having a regular pattern with boundaries of hedgerow, some clipped and some outgrown and a significant number of hedgerow trees although not within the site area itself. There are also some remnant dry stone walls across the local landscape.

8.2 Assessment of Sensitivity of Landscape receptors

Dundry Plateau Landscape Character (Local character)

8.2.1 The local landscape here is very typical of the slightly more enclosed landscapes to be found within the Dundry area. The condition of the landscape is moderate to good with road noise the only significant detractor. There are a number of well used commuter routes close to the site area and road noise is surprisingly intrusive. The value of the local landscape around area 8 is assessed as medium.

8.2.2 The susceptibility of area 8 to medium to high density, two-storey housing (its ability to accommodate this development without undue consequences to the maintenance of the baseline) is assessed as medium to high. Development here would be a complete change to the existing landscape character especially when taken as a whole with potential development continuing to the north-west. It is not possible to accommodate development without significant change to the baseline character.

8.2.3 The **sensitivity** of the **Dundry Plateau local Landscape Character** as a combination of value and susceptibility is assessed as **medium to high** for medium to high density housing.

8.3 Assessment of Magnitude of Landscape effects for Landscape Receptors

8.3.1 Magnitude is assessed in terms of geographical extent of change to the receptors; scale and/or size of change; the duration and reversibility of change

Dundry Plateau local Landscape Character

8.3.2 Development of medium to high density two storey housing to form part of a new settlement area in area 8 needs to be considered in relation to the further possible development to

the north-west. The magnitude of effects of development in relation to development extending out to the eastern extent of area 8 adds little to the effect of development ending at Highwall Lane on the west side of the site. Taking the site area alone, the magnitude of effects is low in relation to the local landscape.

8.4 Significance of Effects of change to Landscape Receptors in 8 from Development of Medium to High Density Two Storey Housing

8.4.1 Significance of effects combines the assessment scores for sensitivity and magnitude. The significance of effects of either development type in relation to landscape character and is assessed as medium and is negative overall.

9.0 Visual Impact Assessment

9.1 Visual Receptors:

Maes Knoll

9.1.1 This is a well used local beauty spot and Scheduled Ancient Monument with extensive views to the south, east and north. In the assessment of visual impact in relation to Maes Knoll it is important both to assess the impact on visitors to the hill and also on the visual setting of the SAM itself.

Users of Surrounding Lanes

9.1.2 These receptors are mainly car drivers with very occasional walkers and horse riders. Cars are generally travelling at low to moderate speed. There is very little traffic at all on the lanes immediately surrounding area 8 but considerable traffic using Charlton Road which runs in a curve between 0.25 and 0.5km to the south and east of the site. There are occasional glimpsed views to the site from Charlton Road depending on the number of roadside trees and also intervening hedgerow trees. on the A37 but more slowly on Norton Lane due to its narrowness.

9.2 Assessment of Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

Maes Knoll SAM and visitors

9.2.1 The value of this receptor is considered to be high given the nationally important SAM designation and well used nature of receptor viewpoints.

9.2.2 Susceptibility of the receptors to the development of medium to high density housing (its ability to accommodate development without undue consequences to the maintenance of the baseline). This is a very small area within the view from Maes Knoll and it is in the middle to long distance over to the north-east. The relatively level nature of the landscape and the number of intervening hedgerows and trees make it difficult to discern the site in the view at all. Given the distance away from the Maes Knoll susceptibility is assessed as low.

9.2.3 Sensitivity of the Maes Knoll receptors as a combination of value and susceptibility, is assessed as medium.

Users of Surrounding Lanes

9.2.4 The value of these receptors is assessed as low - these are receptors with partially screened views of very brief and intermittent duration although they may be repeated on a daily basis.

9.2.5 Susceptibility of effects of development on these receptors is assessed as low given good mitigation. The existing landscape character is robust in its ability to absorb development without significant impact on views due to the combination of a relatively flat landform and considerable tree cover.

9.2.6 Sensitivity of the Norton Lane and A37 receptors as a combination of value and susceptibility, is assessed as low.

9.3 Assessment of Magnitude of Effects for Visual Receptors

Magnitude is assessed in terms of geographical extent of change including distance from receptors, location eg central or peripheral and amount of view affected within the view area; the scale and/or

size of change including degree of contrast in nature of view; the duration and reversibility of change.

Maes Knoll SAM and visitors

9.3.1 Given the very small area of development in relation to the overall view and the distance from the monument, magnitude of effects is assessed as low.

Users of Surrounding Lanes

9.3.2 Magnitude of effects is assessed as low. The site is a small addition to the overall potential development area and the limited and transient views from speeding traffic reduces the perception of geographical extent and scale in the views.

9.4 Significance of Effects of Change to Visual Receptors

9.4.1 Significance of effects combines the assessment scores for sensitivity and magnitude and is set out below as a table for industrial sheds (with and without mitigation)

Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance
Maes Knoll	Medium	Low	Low to Medium and neutral
Surrounding Lanes	Low	Low	Low and -ve

9.5 Overall Significance of Visual Effects of development in Area 8

9.5.1 The overall significance of effects is considered to be low and negative.

10.0 Combined Landscape and Visual Significance of Effects of Development in Area 8

10.0.1 Whilst the landscape character related effects are assessed as medium due to the radical nature of change to a rural landscape, the nature of the landscape is such that it can accommodate change to the visual landscape with very little impact on receptors. There are in fact very few visual receptors due to the total lack of footpaths in the area or residential development. Taking into account the robustness of the landscape, the overall combined significance of effects is assessed as medium and negative

Appendix 1

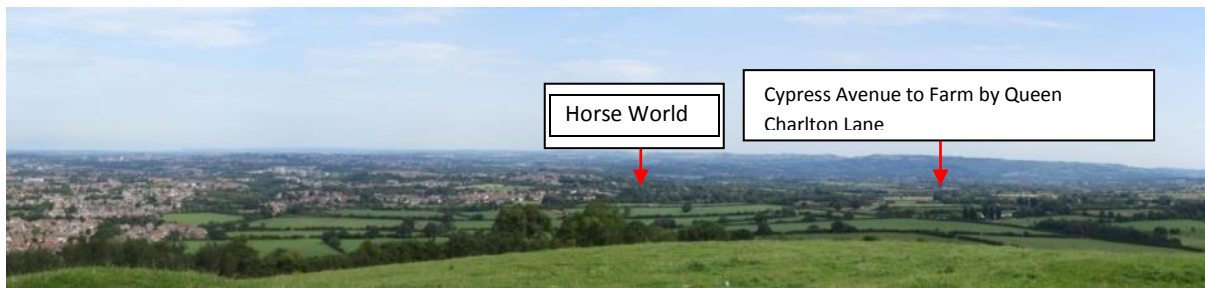
HELAA Review 2016/17 – Whitchurch Landscape and Visual Assessment

HELAA Review 2016/17 – Whitchurch Landscape and Visual Assessment

Whitchurch



P1 - Panorama to Whitchurch from Charlton Road adj. Greenway and Re-Organics



P2 - Panorama from Maes Knoll Hill Fort Looking East to All Possible Development Areas

1.0 Overview and Comparison with Core Strategy Green Belt Review 2013/14 – Whitchurch Assessment

1.0.1 A review of the Core Strategy Green Belt Review 2013/14 landscape and visual assessment for Whitchurch in combination with an initial on-site review has led to a decision to simplify the landscape significance of effects categories for the HELAA review. The Core Strategy Green Belt Review 2013/14 landscape assessment map shows areas of land as red (high -ve significance of effects), orange (medium-high -ve significance of effects) and yellow (medium -ve significance of effects). The HELAA review removes the orange medium to high category leaving just two categories of red (high -ve significance of effects) and orange (medium -ve significance of effects). Areas previously assessed as medium to high -ve significance of effects in the Core Strategy Green Belt Review 2013/14 have been briefly reviewed and the majority re-categorised as medium -ve significance of effects. Only the north-eastern part of Area 11 was up-graded to high -ve significance of effects on the basis of the need to take into account the landscape setting of the church (see area 11 below).

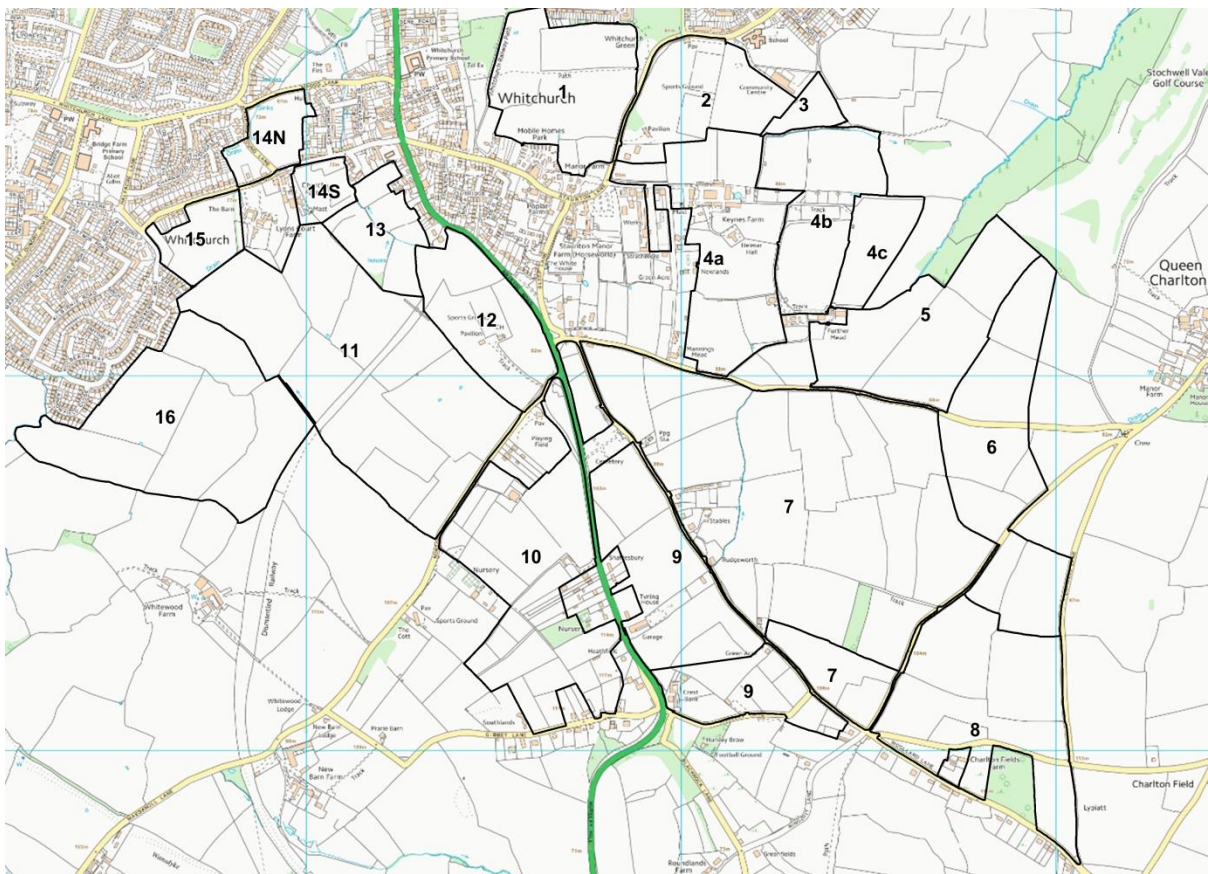
1.0.2 Where areas were changed from medium to high -ve significance of effects to medium -ve significance of effects, this was largely due to a combination of factors:

1. the nature of the assessment being for a much larger area of land in the HELAA Review 2016;
2. the findings of the JSP Landscape Sensitivity Assessment 2015;
3. changes occurring in the search area between 2013 and 2016/17 and also a recognition of the pressing need to find a suitable location for a new settlement in the countryside around Whitchurch and the inevitability of a degree of landscape harm.

1.0.3 The large areas of medium to high –ve landscape significance (Areas C, D and the southern part of E) were reviewed and in the light of the proximity of much of the land to the core areas of the Horse World site already being considered for development; the JSP Landscape Sensitivity Assessment 2015 outcomes; and further site work carried out on the land to the south of Queen Charlton Lane, these areas were accepted as having either a relatively lower landscape character value than the previously assessed medium to high value or a lower level of susceptibility to development effects. This change in scoring tipped the balance of assessment to medium –ve significance.

1.0.4 The HELAA Assessment has also made changes to some of the areas previously assessed as medium and as high -ve significance, see below for Areas 1, 2, 11, 12, 13, 14S and 15.

Map 1: showing the numbered areas that were assessed:



2.0 Sites 1, 2, 3, 4a-b, western third site 7, northern half sites 9 and 10

2.0.1 These sites were previously assessed for the Core Strategy Green Belt Site Allocations (2013/14), see Appendix 2- Whitchurch B, C, D, E and F.

In reviewing this area for this assessment it was recognised that the landscape and visual assessment for the Core Strategy Green Belt Review did not take specific account of the landscape setting of Whitchurch village and the importance of its physical separation from Stockwood. In addition Green Infrastructure was not previously included as a landscape receptor.

Sites 1 and 2

3.0 Site Description

3.0.1 Site 1 lies to the west of Stockwood Lane between Whitchurch village settlement to the south and Stockwood settlement edge to the north. To the west the site is bounded by cycle path which itself runs along the edge of a wooded area. The site comprises three small to medium sized fields and two small fields surrounded by hedgerows. The fields are used for horse grazing and are also very well used for dog walking with three footpaths cutting across them in addition to the cycle path. All except one of the hedgerows are tall and well treed. The site slopes very gently from east to west.

3.0.2 Site 2 lies across Stockwood Lane from site 1 and comprises two small to medium fields used for playing fields. These are largely surrounded by tall, thick hedgerows and good trees, the southern and eastern boundary also following a small stream. Dividing the two fields is a row of very tall conifers the tops of which are prominent in the surrounding landscape. The north-eastern boundary is open to an access track and the local community centre and the northern boundary is the settlement edge of Stockwood. This site is largely flat.

3.0.3 Both site 1 and 2 lie just within the Dundry Plateau Landscape Character Area at its northern edge and the eastern boundary of site 2 form the boundary with the Stockwood Vale Landscape Character Area.

3.1 Short Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of site

Potential Development Assessed:

3.1.1 Two storey residential development - site assessed for development of medium to high density.

Key Landscape Receptors:

- Dundry Plateau and Stockwood Vale Landscape Character Areas
- Landscape Setting of Whitchurch
- Green Infrastructure
- Trees and hedgerows

Visual Receptors:

- Users of footpaths and cycle path on and adjacent to the sites
- Residents of Whitchurch and Stockwood over-looking the sites
- Users of the playing fields and Community Centre
- Users of Stockwood Lane

3.2 Summary Impact (Significance of Effects) on Landscape Receptors:

Dundry Plateau and Stockwood Vale Landscape Character Areas(LCAs)

3.2.1 These sites lie within the Dundry Plateau LCA and site 2 shares its eastern boundary with the boundary between Dundry Plateau and Stockwood Vale LCA. The land begins to slope away eastwards down towards the valley immediately to the east of site 2. The small to medium fields with their well treed hedgerows are locally typical and characteristic of the Whitchurch area but are less characteristic of the more open character of much of the character area. The value of the local landscape character is assessed as medium due to its relatively condition and local representativeness.

3.2.2 The susceptibility of local landscape character to development effects in sites 1 and 2 is assessed as high given the radical and uncharacteristic contrast in nature of the development to the existing countryside character constrained as it is between both settlements, and especially that of the characteristic hedgerows and the difficulty in maintaining these hedgerows in such a development. Sensitivity therefore is assessed as medium to high.

3.2.3 Magnitude of effects is assessed as high whether development was to be over all or part of these sites.

3.2.4 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude is therefore high and negative.

Landscape Setting to Whitchurch

3.2.5 Both Sites lie within the Landscape setting area of Whitchurch (Placemaking Plan Policy NE2A) and within Area 2 of the setting. The following extract from the description of area 2 is relevant here:

“Cultural and Human Factors:

- To the north and north-east of the village lies the edge of the Bristol urban area and also Stockwood. There are relatively small but important green spaces separating Whitchurch from these urban areas. The areas towards the north east are pasture fields with excellent tree-lined hedgerows. All these areas are largely publicly accessible and much valued by local residents for recreation, as landscape setting to the village itself and in helping maintain the physical distinctiveness of the village from the adjacent urban area.”

3.2.6 Sites 1 and 2 form a substantial overall part of setting area 2 and although site 2 is playing fields rather than pasture, the pitches are contained within the original fields and their hedgerows. The value of these sites is considered to be high for all the reasons stated above.

3.2.7 The susceptibility to development effects, of sites 1 and 2 as part of the landscape setting to Whitchurch is considered to be high. These fields and hedgerows form a substantial part of the largely countryside setting to the north and east of the village which still remains intact even in such close proximity to Stockwood. Development of all or part of these sites could not take place without the loss of this setting and the perceived merging of the village with Stockwood and the conurbation of Bristol.

3.2.8 Sensitivity as a combination of value and susceptibility is assessed as high.

3.2.9 Magnitude of development effects in relation to landscape setting, as a combination of geographical extent and scale of any development is assessed as high assuming development over a large part of either or both sites especially given the overall limited extent of the landscape setting here.

3.2.10 Significance of effects of development as combination of magnitude and sensitivity, in relation to the landscape setting to Whitchurch is therefore high and negative

Green Infrastructure

3.2.11 The majority of Site 1 is within the B&NES Green Infrastructure (GI) network (PMP Policy NE1) and lies at a junction between the continuing B&NES GI network and the Bristol GI network extending north-westwards. These also form part of the West of England Green Infrastructure network. The Current Landscape Institute Guidance on LVAs recognises green infrastructure as a relevant aspect of landscape in these assessments. Whilst Site 2 is not currently included as part of the B&NES green infrastructure network, it is nevertheless currently performing that role with its recreational use, its excellent hedgerows and trees, its location adjacent to an existing part of the network and proximity to the open countryside of the Stockwood Vale valley. With development currently beginning on the core Horse World site it is likely that Site 2 and adjacent land to the east will take on an increasingly important GI role locally. The value of site 1 and 2 in relation to GI is considered to be locally high.

3.2.12 The susceptibility of these sites to development effects, in relation to their GI role is considered to be high and certainly in relation to site 1 would break the existing strategic network. Whilst mitigation is theoretically possible in some situations to enable to preservation of GI, where development is of higher densities, there is little scope to provide effective GI and certainly not to mitigate fully for the loss of whole areas function as GI most effectively as whole areas rather than narrow pathways and individual retained hedgerows.

3.2.13 Sensitivity is therefore assessed as high.

3.2.14 Magnitude of effects of development in sites 1 and 2 in relation to GI is assessed as high especially given the relatively constrained nature of the existing GI corridor.

3.2.15 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude is therefore high and negative.

Trees and Hedgerows

3.2.16 There is a network of tall hedgerows with trees throughout sites 1 and 2 with a particularly prominent line of tall conifers forming the boundary between the two fields of site 2. The value of these in the local landscape is assessed as high particularly as a whole network. The susceptibility of these hedgerows and trees to development is high. Whilst it is likely that a proportion of these could be retained within a development, it is generally difficult to ensure long term retention or management and the overall landscape effect of the network of hedgerows and trees would be lost. Sensitivity is therefore assessed as high.

3.2.17 Magnitude of development effects is potentially high given the likelihood of development extending over the whole of these sites.

3.2.18 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude is therefore high and negative overall.

3.3 Overall Landscape Effects of Development in Sites 1 and 2:

3.3.1 The significance of effects scores for every receptor is high and negative and therefore the overall score is high and negative.

3.4 Summary Impact (Significance of Effects) on Visual Receptors:

Users of footpaths and cycle path on and adjacent to the sites

3.4.1 There are three footpaths crossing site 1 as well as a cycle path which runs along the western boundary of Site 1. The medieval Priests Path which runs from Queen Charlton to Whitchurch lies outside site 2 just across one small field to the south and so users have views to the southern site boundary hedgerow currently. All the paths including the cycle path are well-used and the walkers using the paths in site 1 tend to make use of the wider area when not grazed, these receptors have clear views to much of site 1 and to the southern boundary of Site 2 from the Priests Path. The value of the receptors using these paths is assessed as medium to high overall taking into account the popularity of walking in this easily accessible area for local people. The susceptibility to development effects is assessed as high overall given the radical changes likely in views and the potential loss of some of the paths. Sensitivity is therefore high.

3.4.2 Magnitude is assessed as high assuming development potentially extending over the whole of the sites and especially in relation to Site 1, affecting a significant extent of local walking routes.

3.4.2 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude is therefore high and negative.

Residents of Stockwood and Whitchurch overlooking the Sites

3.4.3 There are a limited number of residents of Stockwood and Whitchurch who overlook these sites and views are generally limited to those from upper windows due to the nature of the high hedgerows along the site boundaries. The value of these receptors is assessed overall as low to medium given the likelihood that views are primarily from bedroom windows and the limited number of receptors overall. The susceptibility of these receptors to the effects of development in site is assessed as medium. Views will change radically from upper windows and may well also change and open up from the more frequently used ground floor windows and house frontages.

3.4.4 Sensitivity is therefore assessed as medium.

3.4.5 Magnitude of effects is assessed as medium taking into account the limited number of receptors, the limited views but the likely complete loss of current rural or semi-rural views to development.

3.4.6 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude is therefore medium and negative.

Users of the playing fields and Community Centre

3.4.7 The value of these receptors is assessed as medium given the intermittent use of the facilities. However their susceptibility to development effects is clearly going to be high given that the facility would be lost altogether along with any views within and from the site.

3.4.8 Sensitivity is therefore medium to high.

3.4.9 Magnitude of effects would involve the complete loss of the site to development and therefore the score is high.

3.4.10 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude is therefore high and negative.

Users of Stockwood Lane

3.4.11 These are primarily car drivers but also some walkers and horse riders. The lane is a busy route at all times. There are glimpse views through trees for most of the route although these are clearer in winter. The value of receptors is considered to be low to medium, these are receptors with often high frequency of use but with views which are limited and transient. Susceptibility to development effects depends on how much of the boundary hedgerows is lost and views opened up and changed from rural to urban. Development is likely to have a significant impact on the integrity of the lane in its current form and views are likely to be opened up. Susceptibility is considered to be medium and sensitivity is therefore also medium.

3.4.12 Magnitude of effects is assessed as medium given the relatively short length of road affected.

3.4.13 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude is therefore medium and negative.

3.5 Overall Visual Effects of Development in Sites 1 and 2:

3.5.1 The significance of effects scores range from medium to high. Greater weight is given here to the users of footpaths over the sites who have the greatest exposure to development effects in terms of likely numbers of receptors, their frequency and duration of use of the sites (especially site 1). Weight is also given to users of the playing fields and Community Centre who would lose their views altogether. Overall significance of effects is therefore assessed as high and negative.

3.6 Overall Conclusion Regarding Landscape and Visual Potential for Residential Development in Sites 1 and 2

3.6.1 Overall the significance of effects of development on landscape and views is assessed as high and negative.

Sites 4c, 5 and 6 (north of Queen Charlton Lane)

4.0 Site Description

4.0.1 These fields form the head of Charlton Bottom valley, wrapping around the steeply sided upper slopes. Fields are a mix of arable and pasture medium sized, rectangular and irregular and bounded by a mix of thick grown-out hedgerows with trees and clipped hedges.

4.0.2 There are clear views over the sites from parts of Stockwood, from Queen Charlton, from local footpaths and straight up the valley from as far afield as Hanham Hills, a popular walking area within South Gloucestershire District at Longwell Green.

4.0.3 The sites lie mostly within the Dundry Plateau Landscape Character Area apart from site 4c which is a sloping field within the Stockwood Vale Landscape Character Area and denoting its strong association with the valley itself. The western edge of the site marks the edge of a gas pipeline corridor giving it an artificially straight edge.

4.1 Short Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of site

Potential Development Assessed:

Two storey residential development - site assessed for development of medium to high density.

Key Landscape Receptors:

- Dundry Plateau and Stockwood Vale Landscape Character Areas
- Landscape Setting of Whitchurch village
- Tree-Lined Queen Charlton Lane
- Landscape Setting of Queen Charlton Conservation Area

Visual Receptors:

- Users of footpaths and greenway within and adjacent to the sites
- Residents of Stockwood and Queen Charlton with views to the sites
- Views from footpaths and bridleways and recreational areas to the north and north-east particularly Hanham Hills and on the slopes of the Cotswolds AONB
- Users of Queen Charlton Lane

4.2 Summary Impact (significance of Effects) on Landscape Receptors:

Dundry Plateau and Stockwood Vale Landscape Character Areas

4.2.1 These sites lie at the interface between these two character areas and illustrate the blurring of character which occurs where one area meets another. Whilst most of the sites lie within the plateau character area and are typical of the open, relatively flat or dipping landscape, their skyline position right at the edge of the valley landscape means that they influence the entirely different, enclosed and somewhat remote character of the narrow Stockwood Vale valley character through their overlooking effects at the head of the valley and their containing quality. The value of the local landscape character is assessed as medium to high due to its good condition, representativeness and also to its importance to both character areas.

4.2.2 The effect of development in these sites in relation to landscape character, would be considerable in terms of both the overall character areas, particularly Stockwood Vale, and the local landscape character. The susceptibility of local landscape character to development in these sites is

assessed as high given the radical and uncharacteristic contrast in nature of the development to the existing countryside character. Sensitivity therefore is assessed as high.

4.2.3 Magnitude of effects is assessed as high whether development was to be restricted to some areas or extend across the whole area due to the nature of the valley head landscape and its wrapping around the valley thus magnifying the visual influence of development on the landscape character.

4.2.4 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude is therefore high and negative.

Landscape Setting of Whitchurch village

4.2.5 The northern two fields of site 4b, the whole of site 4c and the western half of site 5 lie within the landscape setting to Whitchurch. Both Sites lie within the Landscape setting area of Whitchurch (Placemaking Plan Policy NE2A) and within Area 2 of the setting. The following extract from the description of area 2 is relevant here:

Natural Factors:

- Distinctive, steep-sided, narrow valley of Charlton Bottom runs close to the eastern edge of the village, the head of the valley coming to an abrupt end just north of Queen Charlton Lane as it leaves Whitchurch village.

Cultural and Human Factors:

- To the north and north-east of the village lies the edge of the Bristol urban area and also Stockwood. There are relatively small but important green spaces separating Whitchurch from these urban areas. The areas towards the north east are pasture fields with excellent tree-lined hedgerows. All these areas are largely publicly accessible and much valued by local residents for recreation, as landscape setting to the village itself and in helping maintain the physical distinctiveness of the village from the adjacent urban area.
- Queen Charlton Lane as it leaves Whitchurch towards Queen Charlton is included. It is an attractive local landscape feature arched over with old roadside trees.

Visual and Perceptual Factors:

- From the eastern edge of Whitchurch to the east of Horseworld there are lovely views over Charlton Bottom valley towards Queen Charlton

4.2.6 The value of these sites as contributing to the landscape setting to Whitchurch is assessed as high, they form a large part of the eastern side of Area 2 of the setting. The susceptibility to development effects, of these sites as part of the landscape setting to Whitchurch is considered to be high as they are key to the “natural factors” description and include views as described under “Visual and Perceptual Factors”. Development here would encroach significantly into the head of the distinctive Charlton Bottom valley which is currently an entirely undeveloped valley feature and a key feature in the views described under Visual and Perceptual Factors.

4.2.7 Sensitivity as a combination of value and susceptibility is assessed as high.

4.2.8 Magnitude of development effects in relation to landscape setting, as a combination of geographical extent and scale of any development is assessed as high assuming development over the whole or any part of these sites.

4.2.9 Significance of effects of development as combination of magnitude and sensitivity, in relation to the landscape setting to Whitchurch is therefore high and negative

Tree-lined Queen Charlton lane

4.2.10 The lane has a distinctive and attractive, enclosed and tree lined character and forms part of the landscape setting of Whitchurch. The value is medium to high.

4.2.11 Development here, extending the effects of possible development along the lane further towards Queen Charlton and its distinctive and attractive approach along 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 and negative, increasing to high and negative closer to Queen Charlton village.

4.2.12 Sensitivity therefore is medium to high and negative increasing to high and negative towards Queen Charlton.

4.2.13 Magnitude of effects of development is potentially high with the possibility of development extending almost all along the lane to Queen Charlton.

4.2.14 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude is therefore high and negative overall.

Landscape Setting of Queen Charlton Conservation Area

4.2.15 Queen Charlton is an attractive, nucleated, plateau-top village with distinctive Lias limestone buildings and significant historical associations. Its position on the plateau and also at the edge of the Stockwood Vale valleys gives it a visually prominent landscape setting with the tight-knit, almost circular village being a very distinctive local landscape feature with a visual and character influence which extends some distance around. The value of the landscape setting of the Conservation Area is assessed as high. Its susceptibility to development is high with the village being absolutely typical of a plateau top village in the countryside. Sensitivity is therefore high.

4.2.16 Magnitude of development effects is potentially high given the extensive nature of the sites.

4.2.17 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude is therefore high and negative overall.

4.3 Summary Impact (significance of Effects) on Visual Receptors:

Users of footpaths (Priest Path) and greenway adjacent to the sites

4.3.1 The medieval Priests Path which runs from Queen Charlton to Whitchurch lies adjacent to all the sites. This is a very well-used path and is included on a number of published walking routes around Bristol and Keynsham. The Priest path is accessed from an equally well-used and distinctive greenway running along the Stockwood Vale valley side. The value of the receptors using these paths is assessed as medium to high overall taking into account the popularity of walking in this attractive area. The susceptibility to incongruous development effects is assessed as high given the visual prominence of development here in most views to the south along much of the walk. Sensitivity is therefore high.

4.3.2 Magnitude is assessed as high with development potentially extending around the top of the valley and affecting a significant extent of the walking route.

4.3.3 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude is therefore high and negative.

Residents of Stockwood and Queen Charlton with views to the sites

4.3.4 There are a limited number of residents of Stockwood who overlook the Charlton Bottom valley and therefore have views to the site in the middle distance from gardens and rear windows. Similarly there are a limited number of residents of Queen Charlton (although a higher proportion in terms of the overall village) with views although these are much closer views. The value of these receptors is assessed as varying from medium (Stockwood) to medium to high (Queen Charlton) The susceptibility of these receptors to the effects of development is medium-high for Queen Charlton residents and medium for Stockwood residents, allowing for a range of types of view, proximity of view and duration of view. Sensitivity therefore ranges from medium to medium-high.

4.3.5 Magnitude of effects is assessed as varying from medium to medium-high.

4.3.6 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude is therefore in a range of medium to medium-high and negative.

Views from properties, footpaths, bridleways and recreational areas to the north and north-east from the middle distance in the settled part of Charlton Bottom valley and on the edge of Keynsham to the north and north-east to longer distance views particularly around Hanham Hills and on the slopes of the Cotswolds AONB

4.3.7 The value of these receptors is widely variable and assessed as low-medium to medium to high overall to allow for a range in the importance of these views over the countryside marking the edge of Bristol and Keynsham. Receptors may be intentionally walking to look at the views or may see the view incidentally and from a distance. Susceptibility to development effects is again widely variable depending particularly on distance of receptor from the view, the location of the development in the view (views directed along the Charlton Bottom valley would have development in the centre of the view horizon; views from the Keynsham edge close to lays Farm would see the development almost opposite) and the focus of the receptor on the view. Overall susceptibility is

assessed as from medium to medium-high. Sensitivity therefore also ranges from medium to medium-high.

4.3.8 Magnitude of effects takes into account the distance away from the majority of receptors and overall is assessed as ranging from low-medium to medium-high or even high when viewed from the path near Lays Farm and in winter.

4.3.9 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude therefore varies from medium to medium-high and negative.

Users of Queen Charlton Lane

4.3.10 These are primarily car drivers but also some walkers and horse riders. The lane is quite a busy commuter rat-run at rush hour otherwise it takes steady local traffic. There are glimpse views through trees for most of the route although these are clearer in winter. The value of receptors is considered to be medium. Susceptibility to development effects depends on a range of factors, in particular speed (relatively low), frequency of use of the route (likely to be repeated trips) and also amount of exposure to the view. Development is likely to have a significant impact on the integrity of the lane in its current form and views are likely to be opened up. Susceptibility is considered to be medium to high and sensitivity is therefore medium to high.

4.3.11 Magnitude of effects is assessed as potentially high.

4.3.12 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude is therefore high and negative.

4.4 Overall Conclusion Regarding Landscape and Visual Potential for Residential Development in Sites 4c, 5 and 6(north)

4.4.1 Overall the significance of effects of development on landscape and views is assessed as high and negative. This is a visually prominent area of rural landscape at the head of an attractive valley and close to the village of Queen Charlton. The landscape is in good condition, is a popular countryside walking area and is an important part of the landscape setting of Whitchurch.

Sites 6 (south of Queen Charlton Lane), 7 (eastern two-thirds of site), 8 and 9 (southern half)

5.0 Site Description

5.1 These sites are an extension of previously assessed land in a triangular shaped area extending south-eastwards between the A37 and Queen Charlton Lane to the west and north respectively and bounded to the east by Dapwell Lane which runs northwards into Queen Charlton Village. There are two additional bisecting lanes. Woollard Lane runs between the A37 and Queen Charlton Lane and Highwall Lane runs to the west of and roughly parallel to Dapwell Lane, curving in to join it and Queen Charlton Lane at the entrance to Queen Charlton village.

5.2 The land comprises predominantly small pasture fields which are generally elongated rectangular and have a distinctive pattern with long sides of fields running parallel to Dapwell Lane in the east. Fields have for the most part, clipped hedges with interspersed hedgerow trees and some small copses and grown out well-treed hedgerows. The land dips gently and steadily towards the north.

5.3 The sites lie within the Dundry Plateau Landscape Character Area and adjoin the Chew Valley Landscape Character Area along the southern boundary where there is a prominent skyline.

5.1 Short Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of site

Potential Development Assessed:

Two storey residential development - site assessed for development of medium to high density.

Key Landscape Receptors:

- Dundry Plateau Landscape Character Area
- Tree-Lined Queen Charlton Lane
- Landscape Setting of Queen Charlton Conservation Area

Key Visual Receptors:

- Receptors within Chew Valley
- Users of lanes running through and around the site and also lanes with views overlooking the sites in particular Charlton Road

5.2 Summary Impact (significance of Effects) on Landscape Receptors:

Dundry Plateau Landscape Character Area

5.2.1 The landscape character here is typical of the Dundry plateau area countryside with a typical field pattern which is locally very distinctive with its parallel clipped hedges around elongated rectangular fields and an open and elevated character and extensive views in places over parts of Bristol and Keynsham, to Maes Knoll to distant hills in the west and over to the Cotswolds in the north-east. The sites are well managed agricultural land reflecting the countryside rather than urban fringe which is some distance away. The value of the local landscape character is assessed as medium, increasing to medium to high with distance from the urban fringe effects of Whitchurch, due to its overall good condition and representativeness.

The effect of development in these sites in relation to landscape character, would be medium in relation to the overall character area and in relation to local landscape character it would be medium to high increasing to high with distance from Whitchurch and its urbanising influence on

character. The susceptibility of local landscape character to development in these sites is assessed as ranging from medium-high to high from west towards the south and east given the radical change in character which development would bring. Sensitivity therefore is assessed as ranging from medium to medium-high.

5.2.2 Magnitude of effects is assessed as high due to its potentially large geographical extent.

5.2.3 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude therefore ranges from medium-high to high and negative from north-west to south and east.

5.2.4 NB: Sites 7 (southernmost tip), 8 (southern part) and 9 (southernmost end) all occupy skyline locations where development would have the potential to impact negatively on the highly rural character of the Chew valley. Development here could exacerbate the negative urban fringe effect of the existing housing along the Lippiat on the skyline.

Tree-lined Queen Charlton lane

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

5.2.6 Development here, extending the effects of possible development along the lane further towards Queen Charlton and its distinctive and attractive approach along 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 and negative, increasing to high and negative closer to Queen Charlton village.

5.2.7 Sensitivity therefore is medium to high and negative increasing to high and negative towards Queen Charlton.

5.2.8 Magnitude of effects of development is potentially high with the possibility of development extending almost all along the lane to Queen Charlton.

5.2.9 Significance of effect is therefore high and negative overall.

Landscape Setting of Queen Charlton Conservation Area

5.2.10 Queen Charlton is an attractive, nucleated, plateau-top village with distinctive lias limestone buildings and significant historical associations. Its position on the plateau and also at the edge of the Stockwood Vale valleys gives it a visually prominent landscape setting with the tight-knit, almost circular village being a very distinctive local landscape feature with a visual and character influence which extends some distance around. The landscape to the south of the village is increasingly out of view towards the south and as such has a decreasing effect on landscape setting. The value of the landscape setting of the Conservation Area is assessed as high. Its susceptibility to development to the south and south-west is decreasing southwards from high to low, with the village being absolutely typical of a plateau top village in the countryside. Sensitivity is therefore varying from medium to high, closer to the village.

5.2.11 Magnitude of development effects is considered to be medium to high overall given the location of any development in relation to the conservation area setting.

5.2.12 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude therefore ranges from medium-high to high and negative overall.

5.3 Summary Impact (significance of Effects) on Visual Receptors:

Receptors within the Chew Valley

5.3.1 The southern extent of the site area forms a skyline to the Chew Valley at a point where the A37 leaves the Chew Valley going northwards. To the west of the A37 there is already some visually poor quality development on the skyline which has a rather urban fringe effect. To the east there is more tree cover close to the skyline and less development, giving an overall attractive valley side and skyline. The value of the receptors in the valley is of course highly variable, from those experiencing incidental views to those using paths or lanes or open areas for recreational purposes and paying attention to the view. Overall value is assessed as medium taking into account variability and also the popularity of walking in this attractive valley. The susceptibility to incongruous development effects on the skyline is assessed as locally high given the potential visual prominence of development here impinging into the very rural and attractive Chew Valley landscape and views. Sensitivity is therefore medium to high.

5.3.2 Magnitude is assessed as locally medium to high due to its potential extent.

5.3.3 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude is therefore medium to high and negative.

Users of lanes running through and around the site and also lanes with views overlooking the sites in particular Charlton Road

5.3.4 These are primarily car drivers but also some walkers and horse riders. The lanes are surprisingly busy and most act as rat-runs for commuters. The Charlton Road is a very busy route at all times. There are a range of views depending on hedge heights along the lanes and in particular, overall height of the lanes in relation to the landscape within the view. There are very open views from parts of Charlton Road over all the sites and beyond. The value of receptors is considered to be medium. Susceptibility to development effects depends on a range of factors, in particular speed (relatively low), frequency of use of the route (likely to be repeated trips) and also amount of exposure to the view. Development is likely to have a significant impact on views, transforming the very distinctive and rural landscape. Susceptibility is considered to be medium to high and sensitivity is therefore medium to high.

5.3.5 Magnitude of effects is assessed as potentially high.

5.3.6 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude is therefore high and negative.

5.4 Overall Conclusion Regarding Landscape and Visual Potential for Residential Development in Sites 6 (south), 7, 8 and 9

5.4.1 Overall the significance of effects of development on landscape and views varies from medium to high, and negative. The significance of effects is lower towards the edge of Whitchurch and becomes high close to the Chew Valley and Queen Charlton. It should be noted that although the significance of effects of development is inevitably going to be relatively high in this pleasant and distinctive area of countryside, the nature of the generally level/gently dipping plateau landscape in large part set away from prominent skylines, its array of hedges, trees and occasional copses and its lack of public access within the sites does make the landscape relatively robust in terms of

development and development effects on the wider area. Considering the need for development in the area, then development would be acceptable here with robust mitigation to retain the overall effect of a well-treed landscape and no development in the southern and eastern quarter of the overall area. A Development Suggestions map is included.

Site 10 (southern half)

6.0 Site Description

6.01 This is a small site forming an extension southwards of the previously assessed northern half of Site 10 (see appendix 1 - Whitchurch Area B). Land is rising towards a high point in the southeast corner close to the A37 and immediately on the edge of the Chew valley which falls away steeply to the south. Similar to the northern half of the site the area comprises small pasture fields set within clusters of properties. The area is relatively well treed with some good tree lines, an area of scrub and trees associated with properties. The A37 runs beside the eastern boundary of the site and Gibbet Lane along the southern boundary.

6.02 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 the area which looks towards the hill fort.

6.03 The sites lie within the Dundry Plateau Landscape Character Area and adjoin the Chew Valley Landscape Character Area along the southern boundary where there is a prominent skyline.

6.1 Short Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of site

Potential Development Assessed:

Two storey residential development - site assessed for development of medium to high density.

Key Landscape Receptors:

- Dundry Plateau Landscape Character Area and Chew Valley Landscape Character Area
- Maes Knoll Hill Fort Setting

Key Visual Receptors:

- Views From Maes Knoll Hill Fort
- Views from Drivers using the A37 Wells Road, Norton Lane and Gibbet Lane
- Views from residents of properties within and around the site.

6.2 Summary Impact (significance of Effects) on Landscape Receptors:

Dundry Plateau and Chew Valley Landscape Character Areas

6.2.1 The landscape quality overall is moderate - pasture fields set amongst small groups of properties on a sloping hillside site. Views are clearly dominated by the steeply rising Maes knoll to the northwest. The value of the site character overall is enhanced by its visual relationship with Maes Knoll Hill Fort and is scored as medium. The site forms part of a low, relatively undeveloped hillside which rises up from and contains the lower open countryside to the north at the foot of the eastern end of the prominent Dundry Hill and Maes Knoll. It also forms a skyline adjacent to the Chew Valley. Susceptibility of the local landscape character (in relation to both character areas) to development effects is high with the loss of this relatively undeveloped green, containing hillside. Sensitivity is therefore assessed as high.

6.2.2 Magnitude of development effects in relation to local landscape character is medium to high with a significant potential increase in the scale of development compared with the existing very low density.

6.2.3 Significance of development effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude is therefore high.

Maes Knoll Hill Fort and Setting

6.2.4 This is an Iron Age hill fort and registered ancient monument. The southern section of Site 10 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 of the Hill Fort and its setting to development effects in this site is assessed as high even though the site is small. Sensitivity is therefore high.

6.2.5 Magnitude of development effects is potentially high with the loss of part of this undeveloped hillside to incongruous development. Significance of effects is therefore high and negative.

6.3 Summary Impact (significance of Effects) on Visual Receptors:

Views from Maes Knoll Hill Fort

6.3.1 Views from the Hill Fort are extensive and to the south east are directly over the site which is in the immediate foreground and currently provides a natural, relatively undeveloped visual setting. The value of these receptors visiting the hill fort is high, with visitors coming to the hill fort for its history and its views. The susceptibility of these receptors to development in area 10 south is assessed as high with development being in the foreground of the view from the hill fort looking east. Sensitivity to the effects of development is therefore high overall.

6.3.2 Magnitude of effects of development is assessed as medium given the small size of the site but for site 10 overall the magnitude of effects is medium to high.

6.3.3 Significance as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude is therefore assessed as high and negative overall.

Views from Drivers using the A37 Wells Road, Norton Lane and Gibbet Lane

6.3.4 Views from these roads are principally from drivers and vary depending on the amount of hedgerow, development and tree screening along the roads. They are generally of short duration due to speed especially on the A37. The value is assessed as low to medium. Susceptibility of the receptors to development change is low to medium and negative in nature. Sensitivity is therefore low to medium.

6.3.5 Magnitude of development effects in Site 10 on these receptors is assessed as low to medium and significance of effects is also low to medium and negative.

Residents of properties within and around the site

6.3.6 These receptors are few and variable in nature, with views 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 of receptors to development effects is high given the proximity of development and radical change in view and sensitivity is therefore medium to high.

6.3.7 Magnitude of development effects on these receptors is assessed as high and significance of effects is therefore high and negative.

6.4 Overall Conclusion Regarding Landscape and Visual Potential for Residential Development 10 (southern half)

6.4.1 Overall the significance of effects of development on landscape and views is assessed as high and negative. The site is relatively small but covers the top of a low hill and is an important part of the landscape setting of Maes Knoll as well as being part of the low undeveloped hillside which acts as a containing landscape to the currently undeveloped countryside to the north.

Sites 11, 12, 13, 14 (south) and 15



P2 - Panorama over Sites from Top Maes Knoll

7.0 Overview

7.0.1 These sites have been previously assessed for the Core Strategy Green Belt Site Allocations (2013/14). See Appendix 2 - Whitchurch, Area A (East of Maes Knoll). The JSP Landscape Sensitivity Assessment 2015, re-assessed this area and selected a narrow north and eastern part of this site area as of more moderate landscape sensitivity, the remaining area being assessed as high sensitivity and therefore sites 11, 12, 13, 14 (south) and 15 have been briefly re-considered here and changes made to the Core Strategy assessment result where considered appropriate in the light of the further work which has been done.

7.02 Site 11 has been re-assessed as entirely red (high –ve significance of effects). Only the northernmost section of Area A in the earlier Core Strategy Green Belt assessment was assessed as medium rather than high significance of effects. In the light of the JSP Landscape Sensitivity Assessment and further work carried out with respect of the landscape setting of Maes Knoll, it is considered that that the assessment of sensitivity (value + Susceptibility) in the Core Strategy Assessment should have identified the whole of Area A as highly sensitive rather than suggesting the area closer to the current settlement edge was less sensitive with higher value and also greater susceptibility to the effects of development. At the time the landscape Setting of Whitchurch had not been assessed. Area 1 of the landscape Setting of Whitchurch village covers the northern part of site 11, site 13, site 14 south and 15. This recognises the importance of these areas to the identity of Whitchurch village as a largely rural village which still retains this identity with the conurbation of Bristol so close.

7.03 Site 12 is considered to be appropriate for some development given protection of the significant hedgerows and re-instatement of the route of the disused railway line as GI. See Development Suggestions Map.

7.04 Site 13 is considered to be important to the historical setting of the church, it lies within the landscape setting of Whitchurch village and also comprises small fields with an interesting pattern of good hedgerows. This area is of locally high landscape and visual value, has a high susceptibility to development effects, would experience a high magnitude of development effects and would therefore have a high negative significance of effects of development. It should remain undeveloped.

7.05 Site 14 (south) is physically very similar in nature to site 13 although separated from the church by development. It is also a part of the Landscape Setting of Whitchurch village and is potentially the primary means (along with site 14north) of maintaining an important Green

Infrastructure link between the green valley landscape to the north and the currently open countryside to the south where there is potential to create an on-going GI corridor further south and west possibly based around the line of the disused railway. Whilst the field is not in itself in particularly good condition, it has an important landscape role which increases its value and susceptibility to development effects. On this basis this site is considered to be Red (high –ve significance of effects of development) and should be excluded from development altogether.

7.06 Site 15 is an important area of undeveloped land within the landscape setting of the village of Whitchurch and separating it from the Bristol edge. It is a medium sized pasture field in relatively good condition and is well used for casual recreation as walkers use the whole field rather than just the footpath within the site. For similar reasons as for sites 13 and 14 south, this field is assessed as having high sensitivity (value + susceptibility), high magnitude of effects and therefore a high negative significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude.

Site 14 (North)



P3 - Site 14 (North) from Washing Pound Lane (north west corner of site looking up hill)

8.0 Site Description

8.0.1 This is a small, moderately steeply sloping, pasture field surrounded on three sides by narrow lanes and by a small housing estate on the eastern side. This field plays an important role in providing green separation between the village of Whitchurch and Bristol and is part of the landscape setting of Whitchurch village. It also provides a green link between the undeveloped valley GI running northwards (on the west side of Stockwood) and the currently open countryside to the south. The site is glimpsed in the middle distance as part of the continuous thread of GI running north when viewed from the top of Maes Knoll.

8.0.2 The sites lie within the Dundry Plateau Landscape Character Area.

8.1 Short Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of site

Potential Development Assessed:

Two storey residential development - site assessed for development of medium to high density.

Key Landscape Receptors:

- Dundry Plateau Landscape Character Area
- Landscape setting of Whitchurch village and existing Green Infrastructure (not designated currently)

Key Visual Receptors:

- Views from residents of properties and users of lanes around the site

8.2 Summary Impact (significance of Effects) on Landscape Receptors:

Dundry Plateau Landscape Character Area

8.2.1 The landscape of pasture fields and excellent tall hedgerows visually dominated by the eastern end of Dundry Hill is high quality and in good agricultural condition even allowing for the housing along the north-western boundary. Site 14 north is at the very edge of the north-eastern part of the character area almost surrounded by development. The value of the local landscape character is scored as medium. Susceptibility of the local landscape character to development is high with the loss of this one remaining pasture field with its good hedgerow trees and old field walls. Sensitivity is therefore assessed as high.

8.2.2 Magnitude of development effects in relation to local landscape character is medium to high and significance of development effects is therefore high and negative.

Landscape Setting of Whitchurch village and Green Infrastructure

8.2.3 This site is part of area 1 of the landscape setting to Whitchurch. It is particularly important in maintaining the distinctiveness of Whitchurch as a village within a rural setting, albeit here being very much reduced. Along with site 15 this site links the green undeveloped valley to the north with the wider countryside to the south and as such forms a potentially valuable green infrastructure corridor which would link with the existing designated corridor. The value of this site is considered to be high especially as the rural area here has been so much reduced. Its susceptibility to development effects is assessed as high and sensitivity is therefore also high.

8.2.4 Magnitude of effects is assessed as high with the potential merging of settlements.

8.2.5 Significance of effects as a combination of sensitivity and magnitude is therefore high and negative

8.3 Summary Impact (significance of Effects) on Visual Receptors:

Views from residents of properties and users of lanes around the site

8.3.1 There are few receptors here although the Washing Pool Lane is likely to be a popular walking and cycling route giving access to the wider countryside. Value of receptors is assessed as low to medium. Susceptibility to development effects is medium and sensitivity is therefore medium.

8.3.2 Magnitude of effects of development is assessed as medium to high and significance is therefore assessed as medium to high and negative overall.

8.4 Overall Conclusion Regarding Landscape and Visual Potential for Residential Development in site 14 (north)

8.4.1 Overall the significance of effects of development on landscape and views is assessed as high and negative. The site is particularly important as landscape setting to Whitchurch and in providing a GI link.

Site 16

9.0 Site Description

9.0.1 This site is a continuation of Site 11 previously assessed for the Core Strategy (Appendix 1 Whitchurch site A). It comprises small to medium sized roughly rectangular pasture fields with excellent tall hedgerow boundaries.

9.0.2 The area lies immediately at the foot of Maes Knoll Hill Fort adjacent to the west-southwest, itself forming a notable landmark at the end of the much higher Dundry Hills which rise above the plateau and dominate the local landscape. To the northwest the site is bounded by existing housing development and elsewhere the site abuts countryside. The just visible route of the old disused north Somerset railway runs along the south-eastern boundary of the site.

9.0.3 The sites lie within the Dundry Plateau Landscape Character Area.

9.1 Short Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of site

Potential Development Assessed:

Two storey residential development - site assessed for development of medium to high density.

Key Landscape Receptors:

- Dundry Plateau Landscape Character Area
- Maes Knoll Hill Fort Setting
- Tall Hedgerows and hedgerow trees

Key Visual Receptors:

- Views From Maes Knoll Hill Fort
- Views from residents of properties adjacent to the site
- Views from footpaths running through and adjacent to the site

9.2 Summary Impact (significance of Effects) on Landscape Receptors:

Dundry Plateau Landscape Character Area

9.2.1 The landscape of pasture fields and excellent tall hedgerows visually dominated by the eastern end of Dundry Hill is high quality and in good agricultural condition even allowing for the housing along the north-western boundary. The value of the local landscape character is scored as high. Susceptibility of the local landscape character to development is high with the loss of attractive and well treed countryside to housing. Sensitivity is therefore assessed as high.

9.2.2 Magnitude of development effects in relation to local landscape character is high and significance of development effects is therefore high.

Maes Knoll Hill Fort and Setting

9.2.3 This is an Iron Age hill fort and registered ancient monument. The site lies right at the foot of Dundry Hill below the hill fort. There is a context of landscape history and continuity here. The value is undoubtedly high. Susceptibility of the Hill Fort and its setting to development effects in this site is assessed as high and sensitivity is therefore high.

9.2.4 Magnitude of development effects is high with the loss of immediate landscape setting of the hill fort to incongruous development. Significance of effects is therefore high and negative.

9.3 Summary Impact (significance of Effects) on Visual Receptors:

Views from Maes Knoll Hill Fort

9.3.1 Views from the Hill Fort are extensive and the majority of the landscape in views to the east and south is of attractive undeveloped countryside. The site is in the immediate foreground looking down from the hill fort and currently provides a natural, undeveloped and open visual setting. The value of these receptors visiting the hill fort is high, with visitors coming to the hill fort for its history and its views. The susceptibility of these receptors to development in site 16 is assessed as high with development being in the foreground of the view. Sensitivity to the effects of development is therefore high overall.

9.3.2 Magnitude of effects of development is assessed as high and significance is therefore assessed as high and negative overall.

Views from residents of properties adjacent to the site

9.3.3 Views from these residents are in part filtered by trees along the garden boundaries. The value is assessed as medium. Susceptibility of the receptors to development change is also assessed as medium given the filtering of views and variable nature of likely exposure to the view. Sensitivity is therefore also medium.

9.3.4 Magnitude of development effects in Site 16 on these receptors is assessed as medium to high and significance of effects is therefore medium to high and negative.

Views from footpaths running through and adjacent to the site

9.3.5 These receptors use not only the footpaths but also the fields as well, mostly for dog walking but also making use of a documented Ramblers walking route. Their value is assessed as medium to high being frequent users out to enjoy the countryside as well as to take exercise or walk the dog. Susceptibility of receptors to development effects is high given the proximity of development and radical change in view and sensitivity is therefore high.

9.3.6 Magnitude of development effects on these receptors is assessed as high and significance of effects is therefore high and negative.

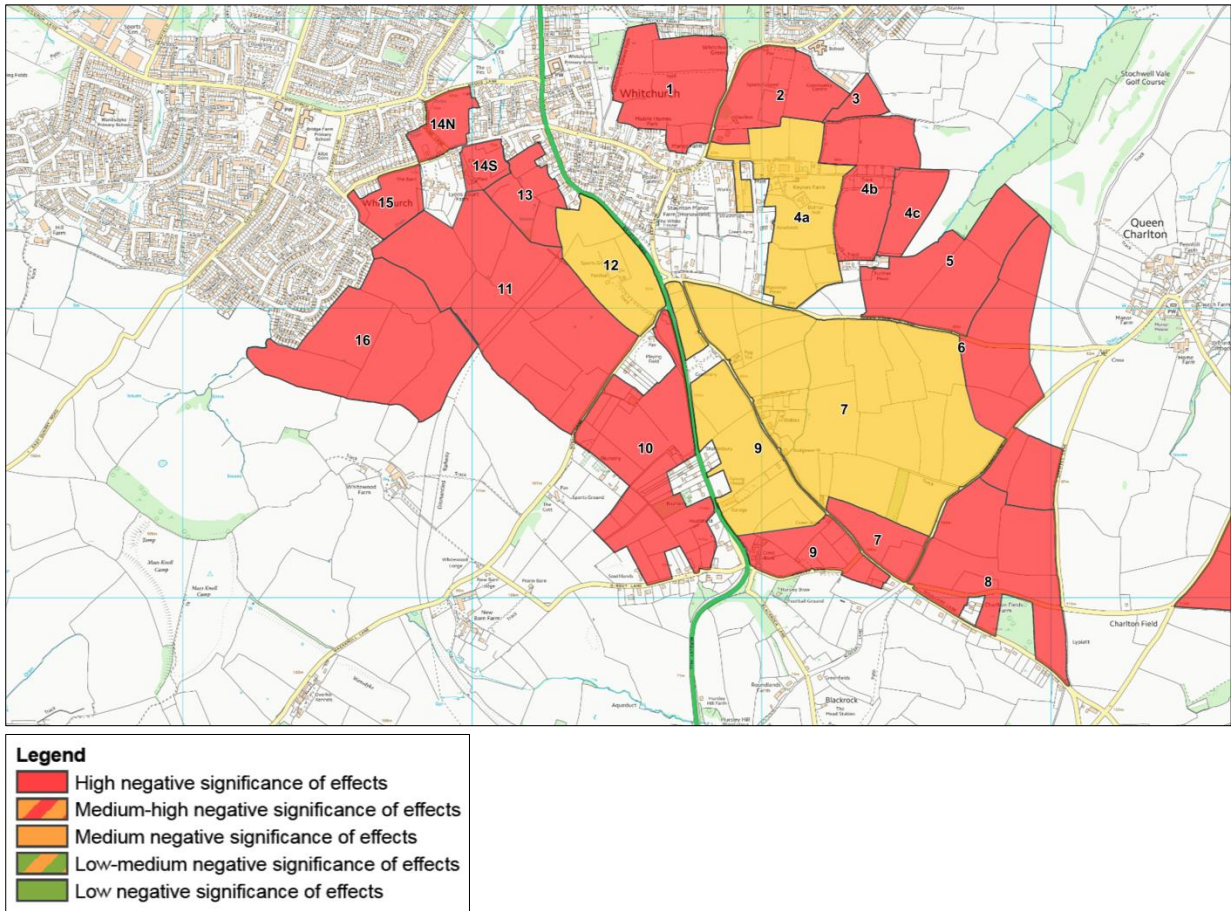
9.4 Overall Conclusion Regarding Landscape and Visual Potential for Residential Development in site 16

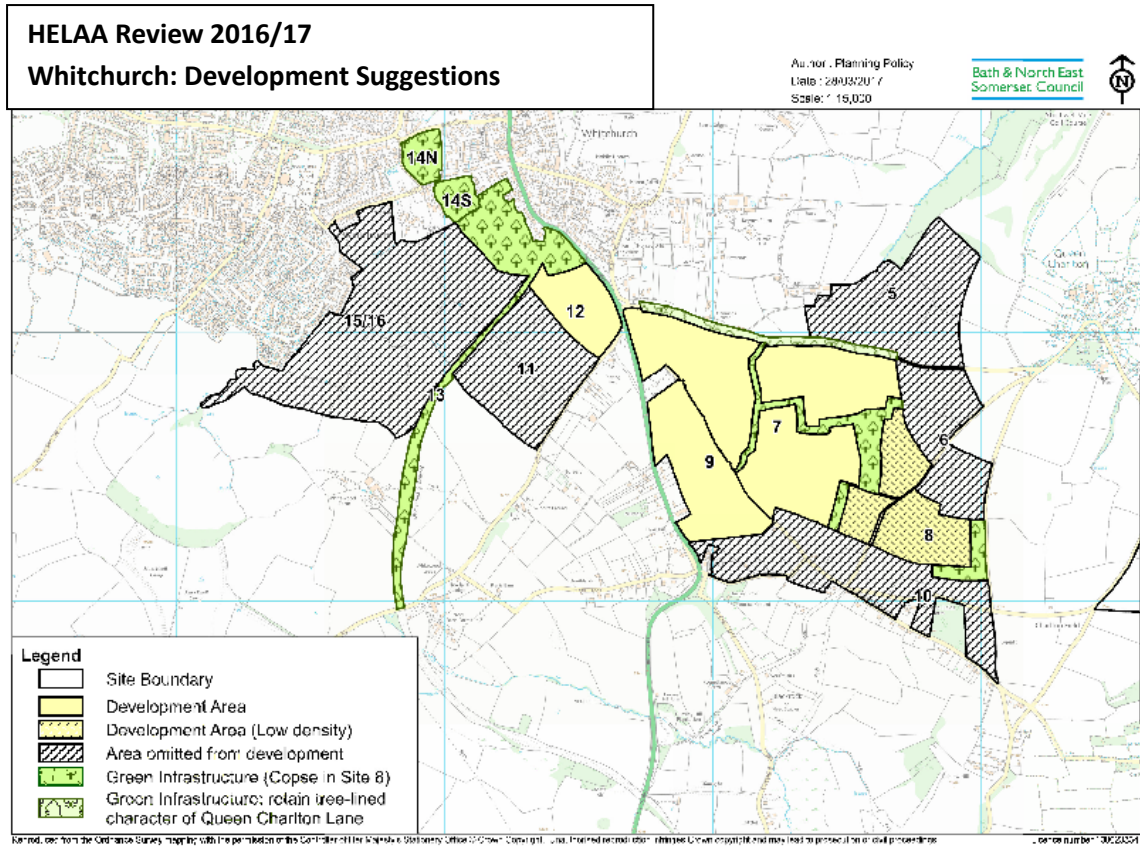
9.4.1 Overall the significance of effects of development on landscape and views is assessed as high and negative. The site is immediately below the hill fort and is an important part of its landscape setting.

10.0 Landscape Assessment and Development Suggestions Maps for Whitchurch HELAA Landscape Review 2016/17

10.0.1 The following maps show firstly an overall landscape and visual assessment Combined Significance of Development Effects map for the assessment area and secondly a very broad brush development suggestions map. This gives areas suitable for medium to high density development, for lower density development and also suggests key areas for green infrastructure

Map 2: showing overall output of landscape and visual assessment





Map 3: Whitchurch Development Suggestions

Appendix 2

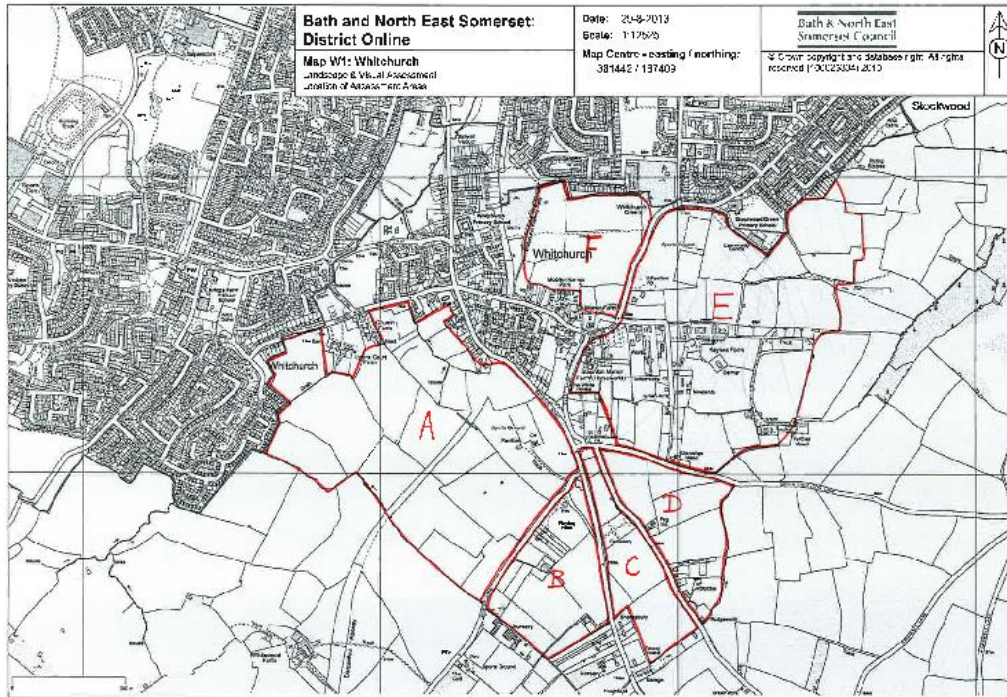
Core Strategy Green Belt Site Allocations (2013/14)

Core Strategy Green Belt Review 2013/14

Whitchurch Landscape and Visual Assessment Summary

1.0 Introduction

Map 1 – 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.

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

2.0.1 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

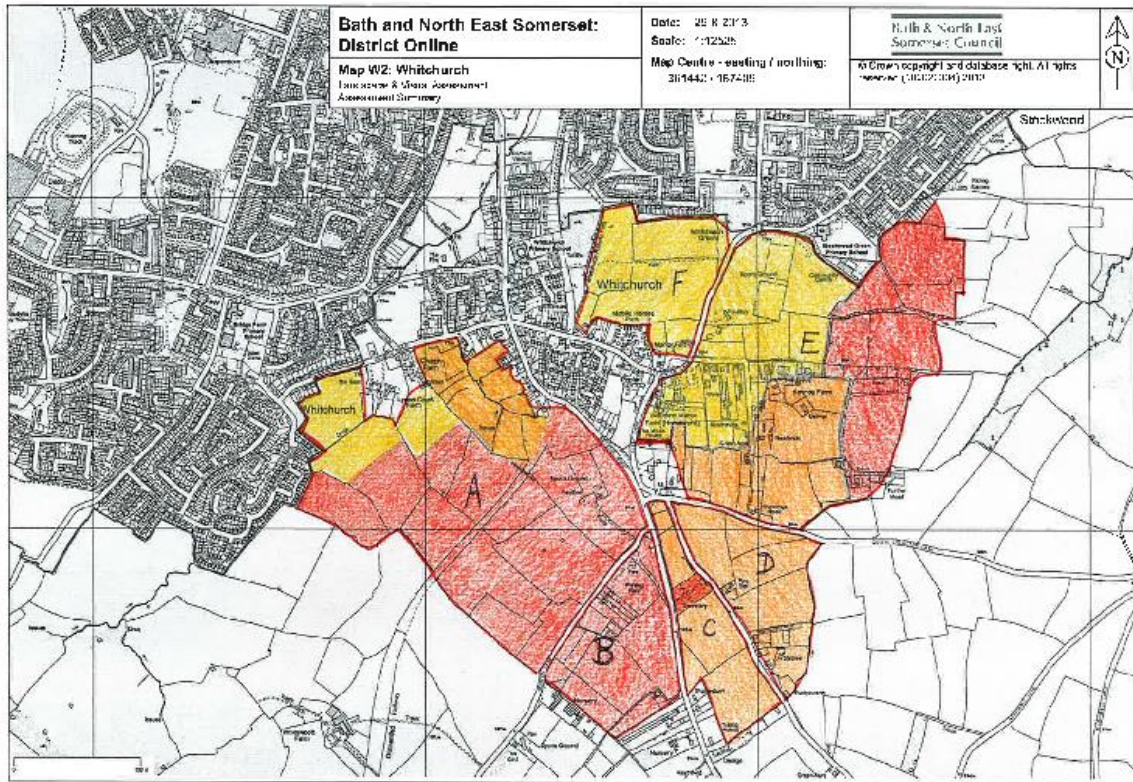
2.0.2 Areas scoring high negative significance are those where development cannot be mitigated for in order to improve its acceptability. In terms of impacts on landscape and visual factor development is inappropriate in these areas.

2.0.3 Areas scoring medium to high negative are those where some limited development could be acceptable with very significant design mitigation measures. However the preference would be for no development

2.0.4 Areas scoring medium negative are those where development can be acceptable with appropriate design mitigation measures.

2.0.5 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

2.0.6 The Areas are shown over the page on Map W 2 – Whitchurch Landscape & visual Assessment; Summary



Map W 2 – Whitchurch Landscape & visual Assessment – Summary of Significance of Development Effects

(Red – High and -ve; Orange – Medium to High and -ve; Yellow - Medium and –ve)

2.1 Limitations to Assessment

2.1.1 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.

3.0 Area A – Land East of Maes Knoll

Refer to MapW1 (Whitchurch Areas of Search).

3.1 Landscape Assessment

Baseline Description

3.1.1 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.

3.1.2 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

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

Landscape Character

Value

3.1.4 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

3.1.5 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

3.1.6 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

Maes Knoll Hill Fort and Setting

Value

3.1.7 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

3.1.8 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-high and negative. Most of the area scores as high.

Sensitivity

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

Hedgerows, Stream lines, Specimen Trees and Old Ponds

Value

3.1.10 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

3.1.11 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

3.1.12 The Sensitivity overall is medium to high

Disused Railway Line

Value

3.1.13 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

3.1.14 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

3.1.15 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

3.1.16 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.**

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

Landscape Character

3.1.18 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.

Maes Knoll Hill Fort and Setting

3.1.19 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.

Hedgerows, Stream lines, Specimen Trees and Old Ponds

3.1.20 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

Disused Railway Line

3.1.21 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

3.1.22 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 in the east 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

3.1.23 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.

3.2 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)

Views From Maes Knoll Hill Fort

Value

3.2.1 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

3.2.2 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

3.2.3 Sensitivity to the effects of housing development is high overall

Views from PROW users including the Bristol Ramblers South Circular Walk

Value

3.2.4 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

3.2.5 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

3.2.6 The sensitivity is high

Views from Drivers using the A37 Wells Road and Norton Lane

Value

3.2.7 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

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

Sensitivity

3.2.9 The sensitivity is medium

Views from residents of properties along the northern site boundary

Value

3.2.10 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

3.2.11 Medium

Sensitivity

3.2.12 Medium

Overall Visual Sensitivity score for Area A

3.2.13 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

Views From Maes Knoll Hill Fort

3.2.14 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

Views from PROW users including the Bristol Ramblers South Circular Walk

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

Views from Drivers using the A37 Wells Road and Norton Lane

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

Views from residents of properties along the northern site boundary

3.2.17 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

3.2.18 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

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

4.0 Area B

4.1 Landscape Assessment

Baseline Description

4.1.1 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.

4.1.2 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)

- The Landscape Character itself
- Maes Knoll Hill Fort Setting
- Hedgerows and Trees

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

Landscape Character

Value

4.1.4 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

4.1.5 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)

4.1.6 The sensitivity is scored as high

Maes Knoll Hill Fort and Setting

Value

4.1.7 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

4.1.8 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

4.1.9 The Sensitivity is high

Hedgerows and Trees

Value

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

Susceptibility to change

4.1.11 Medium

Sensitivity

4.1.12 Medium

Overall Landscape Sensitivity score for Area B

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

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

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

Landscape Character

4.1.15 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

4.1.16 The magnitude is high and negative in nature of effects

Hedgerows and Trees

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

4.1.18 **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

4.1.19 Overall the significance score is high and negative

4.2 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)

Views from Maes Knoll Hill Fort

Value

4.2.1 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

4.2.2 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

4.2.3 Sensitivity to the effects of housing development is high overall

Views from Drivers using the A37 Wells Road and Norton Lane

Value

4.2.4 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

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

Sensitivity

4.2.6 The sensitivity is medium

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

4.2.7 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

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

Sensitivity

4.2.9 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

4.2.10 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

Views from Maes Knoll Hill Fort

4.2.11 The magnitude is high and negative in nature of effects

Views from Drivers using the A37 Wells Road and Norton Lane

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

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

4.2.13 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

4.2.14 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

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

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

5.1 Landscape Assessment

Baseline Description

5.1.1 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.

5.1.2 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

5.1.3 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)

Landscape Character

Value

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

Susceptibility to change

5.1.5 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)

5.1.6 Medium

Queen Charlton Lane

Value

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

Susceptibility to change

5.1.8 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

5.1.9 The sensitivity is medium to high

Hedges and Trees

Value

5.1.10 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

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

Sensitivity

5.1.12 Sensitivity to the effects of housing development is medium overall

Cemetery

Value

5.1.13 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

5.1.14 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

5.1.15 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

5.1.16 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

5.1.17 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

5.1.18 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

5.1.19 Magnitude is medium and negative in nature of effects

4. Cemetery

5.1.20 The magnitude is low and negative in nature of effects

5.1.21 **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

5.1.22 **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

5.2 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)

Views from Road Users

Value

5.2.1 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

5.2.2 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

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

Views from residents of properties and Cemetery visitors

Value

5.2.4 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

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

Sensitivity

5.2.6 The sensitivity is medium

Overall Visual Sensitivity score for Areas C and D

5.2.7 Medium

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

Views from Road Users

5.2.8 The magnitude is medium and negative in nature of effects

Views from residents and Cemetery visitors

5.2.9 The magnitude is medium and negative in nature of effects

Overall Magnitude score for Areas C and D

5.2.10 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

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

6.0 Area E – Land around Horse World

6.1 Landscape Assessment

Baseline Description

6.1.1 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.

6.1.2 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)

Landscape Character

Value

6.1.3 This is attractive and high quality countryside in very good condition with very distinctive character particularly associated with the tiny strip lynchet 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

6.1.4 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 Lynchet 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 Lynchet fields.

Sensitivity (value + susceptibility)

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

The Strip Lynchet Fields and their Hedgerows

Value

6.1.6 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

6.1.7 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

6.1.8 The sensitivity is medium to high

Hedgerows and Trees (excluding Strip Lynchet area)

Value

6.1.9 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

6.1.10 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

6.1.11 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 Lynchet Fields and hedgerows	Medium to high
Hedgerows and trees	Medium to high

6.1.12 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)

Landscape Character

6.1.13 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

The Strip Lynchet Fields and their Hedgerows

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

Hedgerows and Trees (excluding Strip Lynchet Fields)

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

Overall Magnitude score for Area E

6.1.16 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

6.1.17 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

6.2 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

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

Value

6.2.1 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

6.2.2 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

6.2.3 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

6.2.4 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

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

Sensitivity

6.2.6 Sensitivity is medium to high

Views from PROW users within the site area



Viewpoint 4

Value

6.2.7 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

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

Sensitivity

6.2.9 Sensitivity is medium to high through to high

Views from residents and businesses within the site area

Value

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

Susceptibility to Change

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

Sensitivity

6.2.12 The sensitivity is low to medium

Views from residents of Stockwood and Whitchurch village abutting the area

Value

6.2.13 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

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

Sensitivity

6.2.15 The sensitivity is medium

Views from Stockwood Lane and Queen Charlton Lane

Value

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

Susceptibility to Change

6.2.17 This is variable but overall assessed as medium

Sensitivity

6.2.18 The sensitivity is medium

Overall Visual Sensitivity score for Area E

6.2.19 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

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

2. Medium to long distance views from Maes Knoll

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

3. Views from PROW users within the site area

6.2.22 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

6.2.23 The magnitude is low and negative in nature of effects

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

6.2.24 The magnitude is medium and negative in nature of effects

6. Views from Stockwood Lane and Queen Charlton Lane

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

Overall Magnitude of Visual Effects Score for Area E

6.2.26 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

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

7.0 Area F – Land Between Whitchurch and Stockwood west of Stockwood Lane

7.1 Landscape Assessment

Baseline Description

7.1.1 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.

7.1.2 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

Landscape Character

Value

7.1.3 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

7.1.4 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)

7.1.5 The sensitivity is medium

Hedgerows and Trees

Value

7.1.6 The value is medium

Susceptibility to change

7.1.7 The susceptibility is medium

Sensitivity (value + susceptibility)

7.1.8 The sensitivity is medium

Overall Landscape Sensitivity score for Area F

Receptors	Sensitivity
Landscape Character	Medium
Hedgerows and trees	Medium

7.1.9 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)

Landscape Character

7.1.10 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

Hedgerows and Trees

7.1.11 The magnitude is medium and negative in nature of effects

Overall Magnitude score for Area F

7.1.12 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

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

7.2 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)

Users of PROWs

Value

7.2.1 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

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

Sensitivity (value + susceptibility)

7.2.3 The sensitivity is medium to high

Road Users and pedestrians along Stockwood Lane

Value

7.2.4 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

7.2.5 The susceptibility is low to medium

Sensitivity (value + susceptibility)

7.2.6 The sensitivity is low to medium

Residents of adjacent properties

Value

7.2.7 The value is low to medium

Susceptibility to change

7.2.8 The susceptibility score is medium

Sensitivity (value + susceptibility)

7.2.9 The sensitivity is medium

Overall Visual Sensitivity score for Area F

7.2.10 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

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

2. Road Users and pedestrians along Stockwood Lane

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

3. Residents of adjacent properties

7.2.13 The magnitude is low and negative in nature of effects

Overall Magnitude score for Area F

7.2.14 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

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

See over page for Photographic Assessment

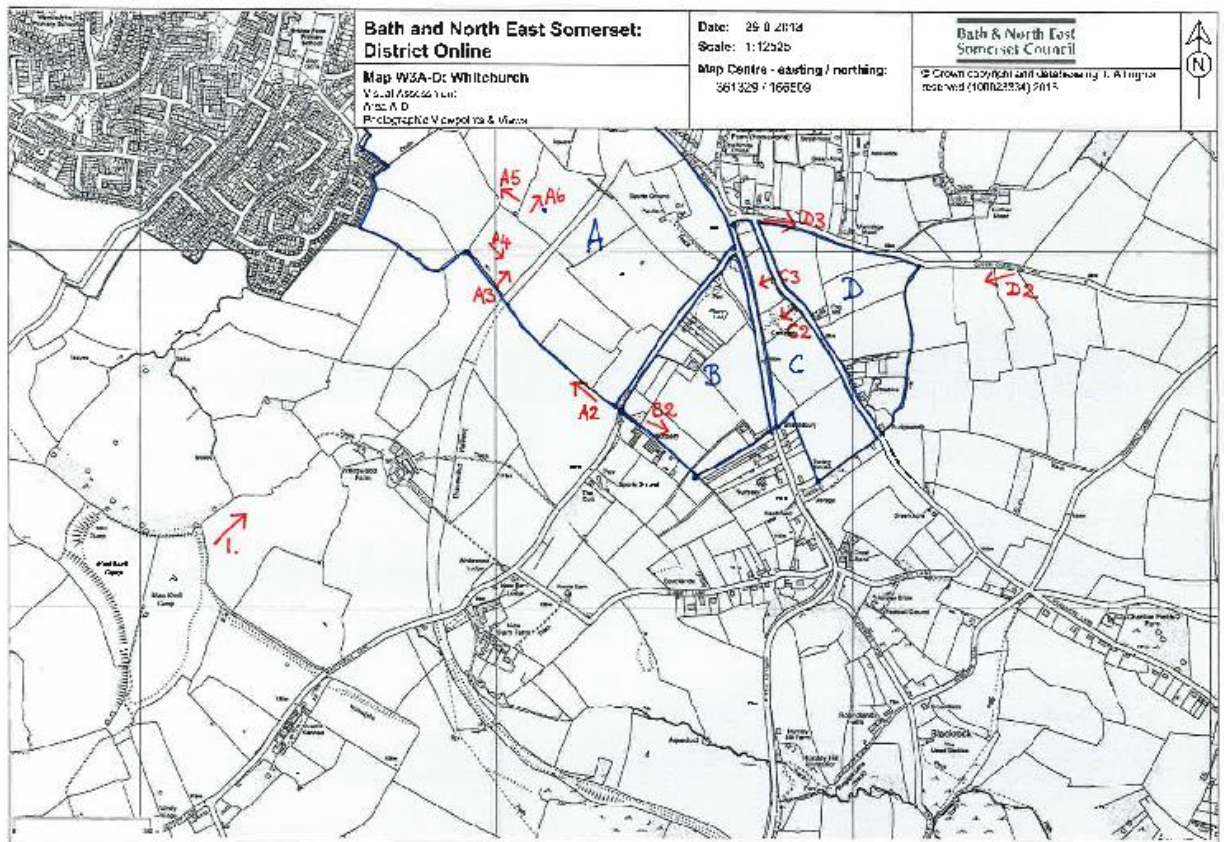
Core strategy Green Belt Review - 2013

Whitchurch

Areas A –D Photographic Viewpoints

(All photographs taken August 2013)

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

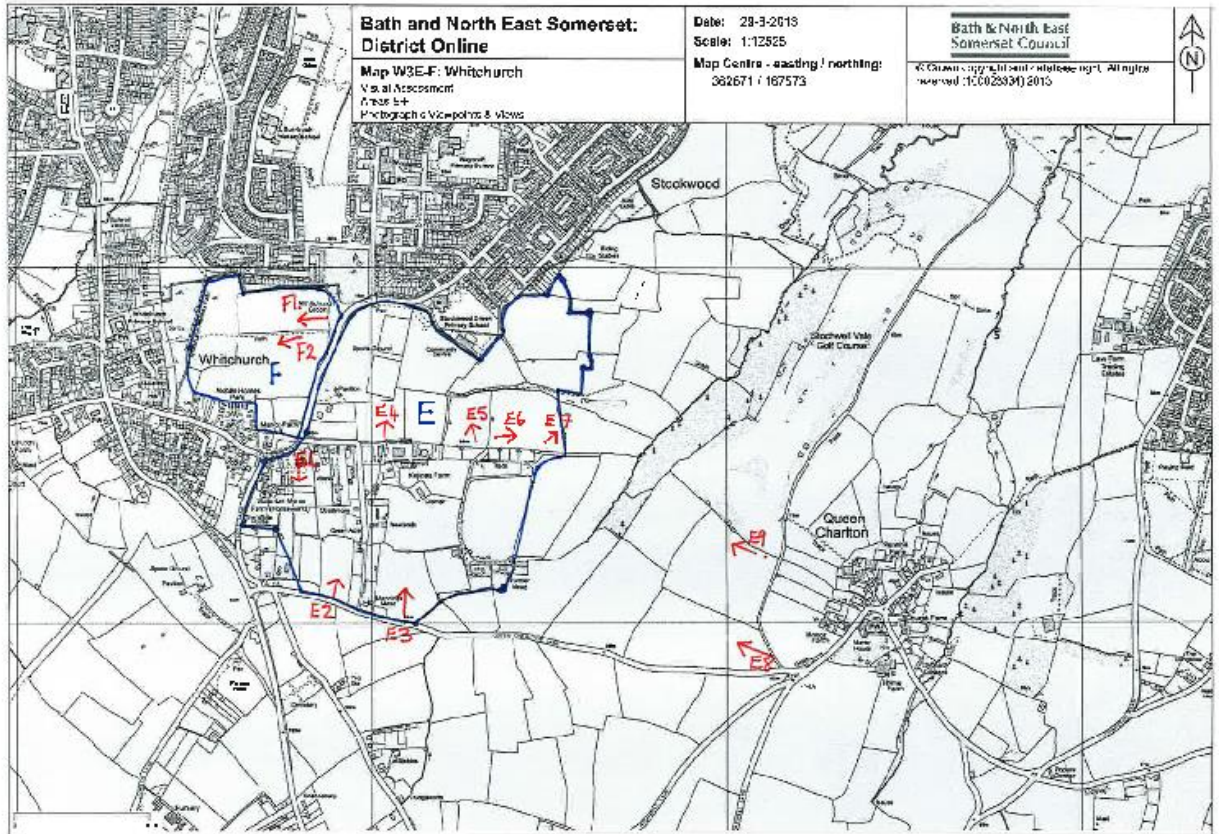


View along Queen Charlton Lane with Area D on right

Areas E-F Photographic Viewpoints

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



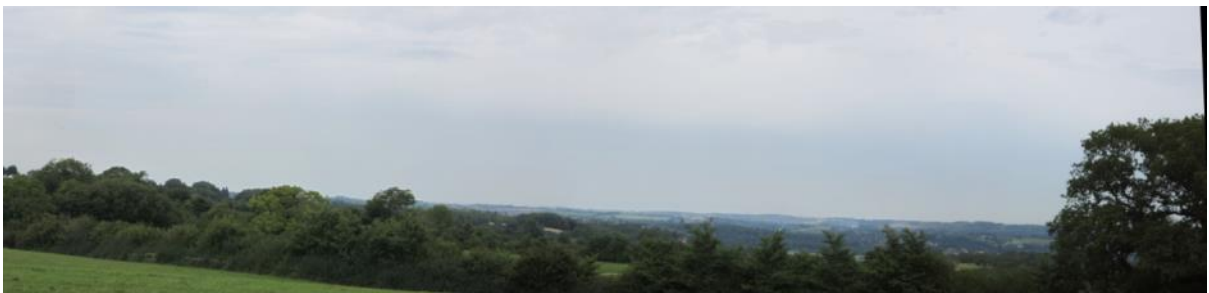
Panorama looking north from PROW within Area E

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



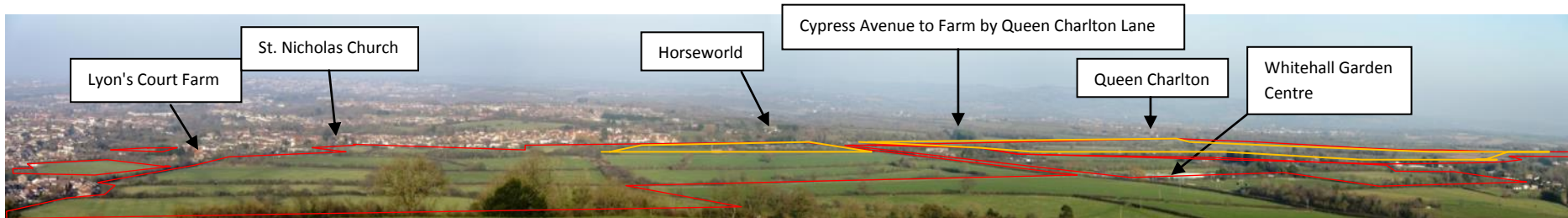
Panorama from PROW within Area F looking west over site towards Dundry Hills in distance

Appendix 3

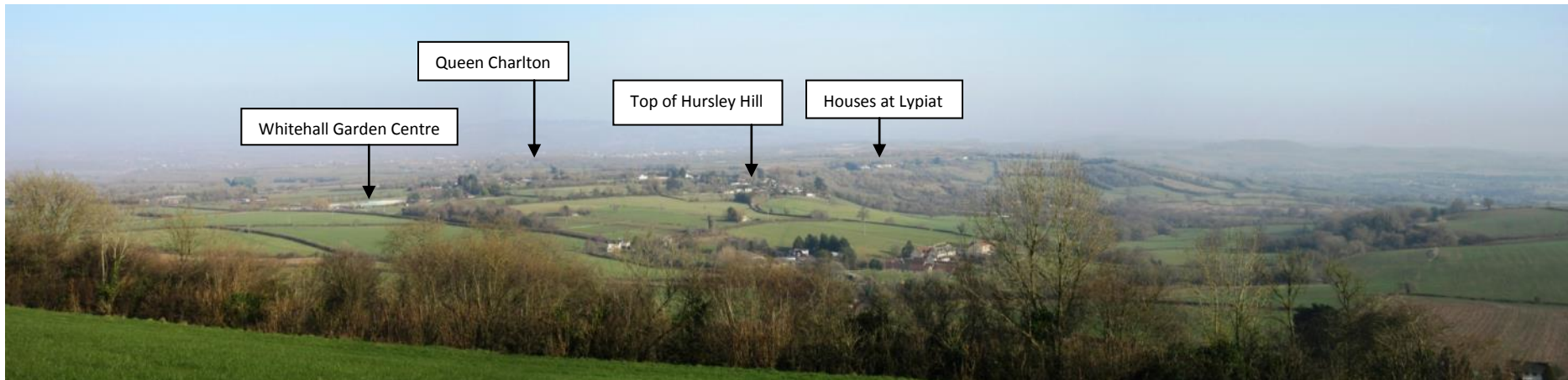
Photographic Survey Panoramas for Whitchurch Strategic Development Location (SDL)

Whitchurch SDL - Photographic Survey

Housing Search Areas

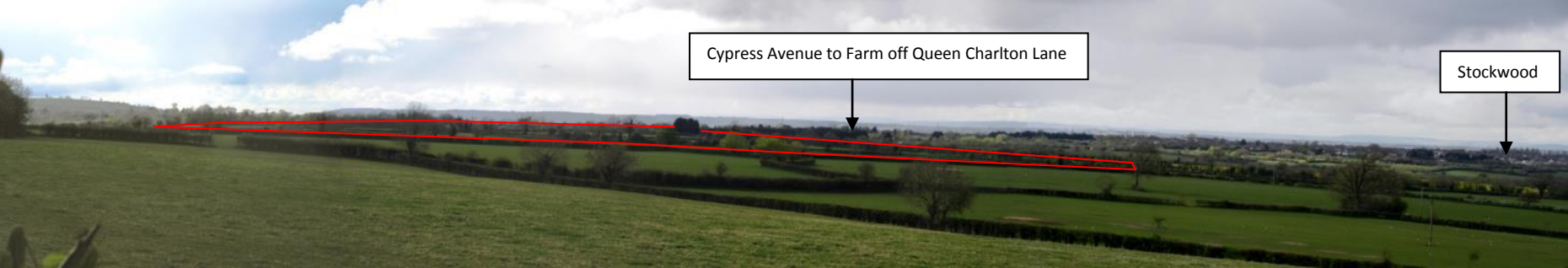


Looking over Whitchurch SDL Area from Top of Maes Knoll Below Ramparts (red line shows search areas west of A37 and west of Queen Charlton Lane only, orange line shows medium sensitivity for housing)



From Maes Knoll looking along Blackrock Valley (Chew Valley Tributary)

Appendix 3 - Photographic Survey Panoramas for Whitchurch Strategic Development Location



To Search Area from Charlton Road Adjacent to Greenway and Re-Organics Ltd (Red line is Approximate search area South of Queen Charlton Lane)

Appendix 4

Definitions

General Assessments and AONB Assessments

Landscape Assessment

Sensitivity

Grading	Value	Susceptibility to Change	Sensitivity
High	Landscapes with national or international designations such as WHS or AONB. Undesignated landscapes and conservation area designations which are particularly good examples their character area/type; in generally excellent condition; highly representative; likely to have high scenic quality and be valued for recreational value; may have known historical, conservation or cultural associations; may be notable for tranquillity or remoteness/wildness/dark skies Landscape elements which are in particularly good condition/high quality/rarity; which are highly distinctive or valued in the landscape as features; historically important elements such as veteran trees, greenways or built structures; landscape elements with particular wildlife interest;	Landscapes or the particular Landscape setting containing the site where development is proposed which are particularly vulnerable to change due to combinations of their intactness; representativeness; topographical distinctiveness; strong landscape structure and quality of landscape elements. Landscapes which are unable to absorb the particular type of development without permanent loss of baseline characteristics or valued elements or where the proposed development would introduce particularly discordant change in character	Sensitivity is a combination of the value of the landscape or landscape element and its susceptibility to change. A High sensitivity score will be where both value and susceptibility are also scored as high or where one is scored high and one is scored medium to high.
Medium to high	Undesignated landscapes which, often due to their extent, complexity or range of elements cannot be described as either specifically medium or high but which have elements of both	Landscapes or the particular Landscape setting containing the site where development is proposed which due to reasons of extent, details of character/elements etc may exhibit susceptibility varying between medium and high or where the overall susceptibility is hard to place as one or the other grading	Sensitivity is a combination of the value of the landscape or landscape element and its susceptibility to change. A medium to high sensitivity score will be where both value and susceptibility are also scored as medium to high; or where one is scored medium to

			high and one is scored medium.
Medium	Undesignated landscapes which are in generally good condition, generally well managed and representative of their character area/type but may have some detracting qualities. Likely to be valued locally but not necessarily of particular scenic interest. No aspects of particular rarity, historical or cultural interest. Landscape elements which are in generally good condition and representative of those found in their character area	Landscapes or the particular Landscape setting containing the site where development is proposed which are reasonably robust and capable of absorbing the proposed development without particularly discordant effects on the baseline character.	Sensitivity is a combination of the value of the landscape or landscape element and its susceptibility to change. A medium sensitivity score will be where both value and susceptibility are also scored as medium; or where one is scored medium and one is scored low to medium.
Low to medium	Undesignated landscapes which, often due to their extent, complexity or range of elements cannot be described as either specifically medium or low but which have elements of both	Landscapes or the particular Landscape setting containing the site where development is proposed which due to reasons of extent, details of character/elements etc may exhibit susceptibility varying between medium and low or where the overall susceptibility is hard to place as one or the other grading	Sensitivity is a combination of the value of the landscape or landscape element and its susceptibility to change. A low to medium sensitivity score will be where both value and susceptibility are also scored as low to medium; or where one is scored low to medium and one is scored low.
Low	Degraded or poorly managed landscapes and landscape elements which show neglect and may suffer from fly tipping, over-grazing, poor hedgerow and tree structure/management/health; damage from poorly controlled recreational use; unsuitable or poorly controlled development; are not particularly representative of their character area/type	Landscapes or the particular Landscape setting containing the site where development is proposed which are easily capable of absorbing the development change without loss of character quality or distinctiveness or which may be improved or restored in some way through the effect of development	Sensitivity is a combination of the value of the landscape or landscape element and its susceptibility to change. A low sensitivity score will be where both value and susceptibility are also scored as low.

Visual Assessment

Sensitivity

Grading	Value attached to the view	Susceptibility of visual receptors	Sensitivity
High	Views over or from nationally recognised landscapes such as WHS and its Setting, AONB or recognised viewpoints with facilities for parking/viewing/sitting; views referred to in local or national guidebooks; locally valued, popular views over high quality or locally distinctive landscapes; views referred to in literature	Receptors who are specifically focussed on the view and may be specifically aware of the value of the landscape/views they are visiting or passing through	Sensitivity is a combination of the value of the visual receptor and its susceptibility to change. A High sensitivity score will be where both value and susceptibility are also scored as high or where one is scored high and one is scored medium to high.
Medium to High	Views combining characteristics of both medium and high value designations, especially large scale panoramic views over mixed landscapes or views over high quality landscapes or popular landscapes which are incidental along paths rather designated for the purpose.	Receptors who may be experiencing sequential views over moderate to high quality landscapes or views to high quality landscapes where there is a significant degree of filtering. Receptors taking walks along popular/designated local or national footpath routes through moderate quality undesignated landscapes	Sensitivity is a combination of the value of the visual receptor and its susceptibility to change. A medium to high sensitivity score will be where both value and susceptibility are also scored as medium to high; or where one is scored medium to high and one is scored medium.
Medium	Views over landscapes moderately representative of their character/type from viewpoints not necessarily designated specifically for the purpose or views where the extent of view may have some degree of filtering; views containing slightly discordant elements or are relatively transient in nature	Receptors who may be using public footpaths or public areas with views or passing through moderately attractive landscapes but are not necessarily visiting for the view. local residents with views from gardens or kitchens which may be partially obscured or filtered;	Sensitivity is a combination of the value of the visual receptor and its susceptibility to change. A medium sensitivity score will be where both value and susceptibility are also scored as medium; or where one is scored medium and one is scored low to medium.

<p>Low to Medium</p>	<p>Views combining characteristics of both medium and low value designations, especially larger scale panoramic views over mixed landscapes; views combining attractive elements with significant discordant elements</p>	<p>Receptors who may be at work but who may have canteens or rest areas with views; receptors from houses where the view is clear from windows but may or may not be valued; receptors playing sports or visiting sports fields where there are open views over moderate quality landscapes</p>	<p>Sensitivity is a combination of the value of the visual receptor and its susceptibility to change. A low to medium sensitivity score will be where both value and susceptibility are also scored as low to medium; or where one is scored low to medium and one is scored low.</p>
<p>Low</p>	<p>Views over degraded or unattractive landscapes or views which are particularly transient/obscured</p>	<p>Receptors engaged in sport or recreation where there may incidentally be views but whose focus is not on the view; or who may be at work and not engaged in the view; or who may be travelling passed views on fast roads; views where any change will be obscured or filtered</p>	<p>Sensitivity is a combination of the value of the visual receptor and its susceptibility to change. A low sensitivity score will be where both value and susceptibility are also scored as low.</p>

Magnitude

Grading	Magnitude of Landscape Effects	Magnitude of Visual Effects
High	Changes resulting in a high degree of deterioration or improvement in landscape character of the local or wider area and/or to landscape elements such as through significant loss or damage to landscape elements; significant changes to topography or obscuring of topography; introduction of features highly discordant in character; significant changes to landscape scale; changes whose strong influence extends beyond the confines of the site to the immediate setting of the site and beyond. Changes which have little or no potential for mitigation where the effects are negative	Changes resulting in a high degree of deterioration or improvement in the view caused by alterations such as the proportion of view taken up by the development; loss of key features of the view caused by the development; introduction of highly discordant or beneficial elements such as skyline effects; highly contrasting visual alterations in terms of form, scale, massing, texture, colour, height; changes which are viewed for a significant duration rather than occasional glimpses or fleeting views. Changes which are unlikely to be mitigatable where the effects are negative
Medium to high	Rare	Changes which may fluctuate between medium and high according to different assessment factors such as yearly seasons; changes which may noticeably differ according to direction or aspect of view; or a contrasting range of receptors with different view durations
Medium	Changes resulting in a moderate and noticeable degree of deterioration or improvement in landscape character of the local area and/or to landscape elements such as through loss or damage to landscape elements; noticeable changes to topography or obscuring of topography; introduction of features discordant in character; noticeable changes to landscape scale; changes whose influence extends beyond the confines of the site to the immediate setting of the site and beyond. Changes which have potential for mitigation where the effects are negative	Changes resulting in a moderate and noticeable degree of deterioration or improvement in the view caused by alterations such as the proportion of view taken up by the development; loss of features of the view caused by the development; introduction of noticeably discordant or beneficial elements such as skyline effects; introduction of visual alterations in terms of form, scale, massing, texture, colour, height; changes which are viewed for a significant duration rather than occasional glimpses or fleeting views. Changes which have potential for mitigation where the effects are negative
Low to Medium	Rare	Changes which may fluctuate between low and medium according to different assessment factors such as yearly seasons; changes which may noticeably differ according to the direction or aspect of view; or have a contrasting range of receptors with different view

		durations
Low	Small changes, positive or negative, in landscape character and/or elements whose positive or negative influence does not extend beyond the immediate confines of the site which may be easily mitigated or require no mitigation if negative	Small changes, positive or negative, in the view which may be easily mitigated or require no mitigation if negative

Significance

Assessed through combining sensitivity with magnitude for each assessed landscape element and for landscape character and making a judgement of overall landscape significance; similarly for visual effects. Significance may be negative or positive but is most usually determined as low (or negligible) to high or very high and negative. The table below indicates how significance is arrived at:

Grading	Significance
High	High or medium to high sensitivity combined with high magnitude; high or medium to high magnitude combined with high sensitivity. Mitigation unlikely to be effective in any way
Medium to High	Medium to high sensitivity and magnitude; medium sensitivity combined with high magnitude and vice versa. Mitigation unlikely to be effective in any but minor ways
Medium	Medium or low to medium sensitivity combined with medium magnitude; medium or low to medium magnitude combined with medium sensitivity. Mitigation likely to result in significant reductions in negative effect
Low to medium	Low to medium sensitivity and magnitude; low sensitivity combined with medium magnitude and vice versa. Mitigation likely to result in significant reductions in negative effect
Low	Low sensitivity combined with low magnitude. Mitigation highly successful or unnecessary