



Landscapearchitects

Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment

Proposed Hotel Development

Land adjacent to Forest Hill Golf
Club, Markfield Lane, Leicester
LE9 9FE

MR20 - 076 / 301

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LVIA Introduction

This study presents the findings of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), which has considered the potential effects on the landscape character, openness and visual amenity of the locality, in respect of the proposed hotel development on Markfield Lane, Leicester LE9 9FE. The site is currently listed as countryside in the site allocations and development management policies DPD - borough wide policies map. The site lies within Landscape Character Area (LCA) - Area B: Charnwood Fringe as defined in the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Landscape Character Assessment (2017) prepared by Land Use Consultants (LUC).

In undertaking this LVIA, receptor locations, numbers and an extent of work required has been progressed in accordance with best practice. A forensic site and context analysis was undertaken during October 2024 to assess the new proposals. Neighbouring historic applications in December 2020 and May 2022, along with feedback from the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and the Pre Application Response have informed the proposals and given a greater understanding of the site, and the local and surrounding landscape.



The report appraises the local landscape and the site and the contribution that it makes to its situation and character; identifies the locations from which the development is likely to be visible; considers the sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors and the magnitude and significance of landscape and visual impacts; and identifies any appropriate measures to soften and minimise any effects, if any.

TEL Landscape is experienced in undertaking landscape assessments based on the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) 2013* and is a registered member of the Landscape Institute.

TEL Landscape is typically involved in producing and identifying the landscape qualities and features of an area which contribute to local distinctiveness, both to improve the design quality of new development and to promote good, sustainable, landscape management. This good practice has been successfully applied to numerous developments within similar environments throughout England (examples are Fulneck School Pudsey, CAW Ingredients Drink Factory at Leeming Bar and Harewood House Eco Pods).

**Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment (2002 & 2013) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)*

Relevant Policies

RELEVANT POLICIES:

Local and Regional policies have been referenced for consideration in the document. Policies will be considered for the mitigation process and be used to refine the overall design process.

The National Planning Policy Framework

Chapter 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (revised December 2023) is entitled.

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.'. Paragraph 180 provides (so far as relevant):

180. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
- d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate

Paragraph 181 elaborates (again so far as relevant):

181. Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework⁶²; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.

Hinckley and Bosworth Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD July 2016

Policy DM4: Safeguarding the Countryside and Settlement Separation

2.2 Policy DM4 provides: “To protect its intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character, the countryside will first and foremost be safeguarded from unsustainable development. Development in the countryside will be considered sustainable where:

- b) The proposal involves the change of use, re-use or extension of existing buildings which lead to the enhancement of the immediate setting; or
- c) It significantly contributes to economic growth, job creation and/or diversification of rural businesses; or
- d) It relates to the provision of stand-alone renewable energy developments in line with Policy DM2: Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Development; or
- i) It does not have a significant adverse effect on the intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character of the countryside; and
- ii) It does not undermine the physical and perceived separation and open character between settlements; and
- iii) It does not create or exacerbate ribbon development;
- iv) If within a Green Wedge, it protects its role and function in line with Core Strategy Policies 6 and 9; and
- v) If within the National Forest, it contributes to the delivery of the National Forest Strategy in line with Core Strategy Policy 21”.

Core Strategy - December 2009

Policy 21: National Forest

'To support the implementation of the National Forest to the north east of the borough, proposals that contribute to the delivery of the National Forest Strategy (increasing woodland cover; enhancing biodiversity; developing a new woodland economy for timber products and wood fuel energy; outdoor recreational and sports provision; and tourism developments, especially overnight quality accommodation linked to tourism in the Forest) will be supported provided that:

- The siting and scale of the proposed development is appropriately related to its setting within the Forest
- The development respects the character and appearance of the wider countryside and
- The development does not adversely affect the existing facilities and working landscape of either the Forest or the wider countryside.

Within the National Forest new developments will be required to reflect the Forest context in their accompanying landscape proposals. Developments shall provide on-site or nearby landscaping that meets the National Forest development planting guidelines. Landscaping will generally involve woodland planting but can also include creation and management of other appropriate habitats, open space provision and the provision of new recreational facilities. The appropriate mix of landscaping features will depend upon the setting and the opportunities that the site presents.

In exceptional circumstances, where planting and landscaping cannot be accommodated on or nearby the development site due to lack of land, a commuted sum will be negotiated. This will be towards the cost of purchasing land for planting, creating a new woodland, providing public access to it and maintaining the site for at least 5 years. Commuted sums will normally be paid to the local authority, who in partnership with the National Forest Company will decide how they should be utilised.

Best practice guidance on the creation and future management of Forest-related planting and landscaping schemes should be followed, as set out in the National Forest Company Guide for Developers and Planners.'

Methodology

Landscape effects consist of changes in the fabric, character and the quality of the landscape or townscape, which it is predicted would result from the proposals. Changes to landscape fabric arise where there is a direct or indirect physical change to the landscape. These occur only within the application boundary.

Visual effects are the predicted changes on views available to the public from publicly accessible areas and residential dwellings. The effects can be negative (adverse) or positive (beneficial); direct, indirect, secondary or cumulative. They are also either permanent or temporary (short, medium or long term), and will be considered at Year 0 (practical completion) - Year 15+ (intended site maturity).

Both landscape and visual assessments are iterative processes which involve the refinement of design proposals to ensure an environmentally appropriate and acceptable solution is achieved.

Landscape data to be recorded and analysed regarding the site and its surroundings in terms of character, sensitivity and enhancement potential were identified in accordance with best practice. Additional information will also be considered including topography, site context and circulation, vegetation patterns, site designation and Landscape Character Area classifications.

Following the collection of the baseline data and site visits, receptor locations for the surrounding area were identified. The locations represented landscape character of infrastructure, residential and public areas, public footpaths and open countryside. Receptor distances were proposed between the site's boundaries to locally significant landscape features up to 3km away from the site. The main viewpoints that have been selected for the study are mostly in close proximity to the site as the baseline study demonstrated that long range visibility of the proposed development is unlikely. This because of the undulating ground in the locality, mature vegetation and urban development, (see page 27 for topographic map). However, additional 'receptor' locations and pedestrian routes were visited at greater distances from the site to confirm the baseline data / desk top study and eliminate doubt.

Completion of this assessment process will inform and refine the design proposals to ensure an environmentally appropriate and acceptable solution is achieved that is in keeping with the locality.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA:

The potential significance of **landscape** and **visual** impacts is determined by a combination of the magnitude of the potential impact and the sensitivity of the receptor to change. The sensitivity is determined by the landscape value and it's susceptibility to change. These variables can be correlated as illustrated using the following information and associated tables. The combinations to complete the table are as follows (with a breakdown description of each following);

ASSESSING COMBINATIONS:

- Landscape Value
- Landscape Susceptibility To Change
- Landscape Receptor Sensitivity
- Landscape Magnitudes of Change
- Landscape Significance Criteria
- Receptor Value
- Receptor Susceptibility To Change
- Visual Receptor Sensitivity
- Visual Magnitudes of Change
- Visual Significance Criteria

ASSESSMENT STAGES:

The assessment stages will be highlighted using the diagrams on the following page;
Diagram 01 - Landscape, Diagram 02 - Visual

Both landscape and visual assessments are iterative processes which involve the refinement of design proposals to ensure an environmentally appropriate and acceptable solution is achieved.

Completion of this assessment process will support the refinement of the design proposals to ensure an environmentally appropriate and acceptable solution is achieved that is in keeping with the locality.

ASSESSMENT STAGES:

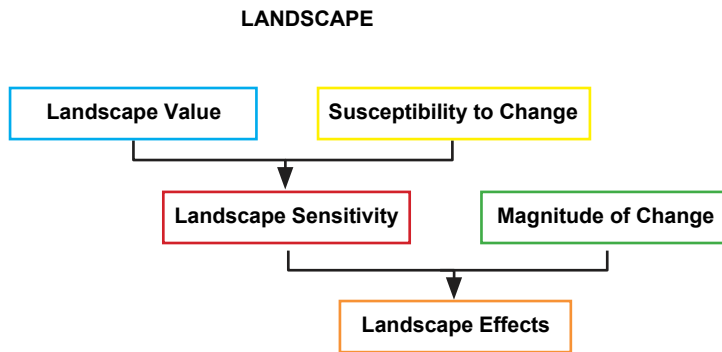


Diagram 01: Landscape Assessment Stages.

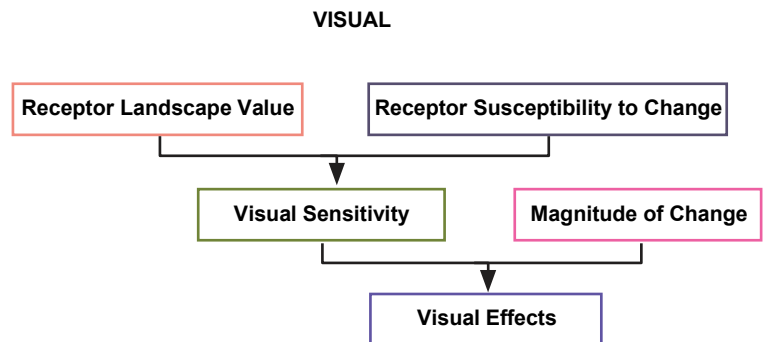


Diagram 02: Visual Assessment Stages.

Supporting Statement

LANDSCAPE VALUE:

Landscape value is measured by considering landscape character and its condition i.e. how intact the typical characteristics of the landscape are. This is to be undertaken for the **Site**, its **Setting** and the wider **Landscape Character Area**.

This will be done by assessing a number of aspects using the table in Section 5.1 of the GLVIA and Table 1, Section 2.4 of Assessing landscape value outside national designations document. The aspects are as follows;

- **Landscape Quality (condition):** A measure of physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements.
- **Scenic Quality:** The term used to describe landscapes that appeal primarily to the senses (primarily but not wholly the visual senses).
- **Rarity:** The presence of rare elements or features in the landscape or the presences of rare Landscape Character Type.
- **Representativeness:** Whether the landscape contains a particular character, and/or features or elements which are considered particularly important examples.
- **Conservation interests:** The presence of wildlife, earth science or archeological or historical and cultural interest can add to the value of the landscape as well as having value in their own right.
- **Recreational Value:** Evidence that the landscape is valued for recreational activity where experience of the landscape is important.
- **Perceptual Aspects:** A landscape may be valued for its perceptual qualities, notably wildness and/or tranquility.
- **Associations:** Some landscapes are associated with particular people, such as artists or writers, or events in history that contribute to perceptions of the natural beauty of the area.

Supporting Statement

LANDSCAPE VALUE:

Following analysis of the Site, it's Setting and the wider Landscape Character Area. The overall value of the Landscape can then be determined and quantified. The below table outlines the Landscape Value from **Exceptional** to **Very Poor**.

LANDSCAPE VALUE	TYPICAL CRITERIA	IMPORTANCE	TYPE	CHARACTERISTIC
Exceptional	• Landscape of great importance and rarity • Robust character with few incongruous elements.	International / National	• National Park • AONB	• High value landscape, usually, exposed, open remote and tranquil with few/no man-made features.
Good	• Landscape is recognised of being high quality. • Clear pattern of characteristic elements with minor incongruous elements.	Regional / Local	• Local Designation	• Medium high value landscapes with moderate enclosure. • Clear pattern of characteristic elements. - Includes important factor as identified in Box 5.1 of GLVIA.
Ordinary	• Landscape is ordinary and is not rare • Characteristic elements are recognisable, but not significant with incongruous elements.	Local	• No designations • Does not include important factors as identified in Box 5.1 of GLVIA	• Medium value landscape • Considerable influence by man • Characteristic elements recognisable with incongruous elements present
Poor	• Low importance and rarity • Weak landscape with a few characteristic elements and generally degraded.	Local	• No designations • Does not include important factors as identified in Box 5.1 of GLVIA	• Low value landscape • Landscape is weak with a small number of characteristic elements. • Degraded landscape
Very Poor	• Very low importance and rarity • Heavily degraded landscape character with a dominance of incongruous elements.	Local	• No designations • Does not include important factors as identified in Box 5.1 of GLVIA	• Very low value landscape • Landscape is very weak with a small number of characteristic elements. • Heavily degraded landscape

Table 01: Criteria for assessing Landscape Value.

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE:

Susceptibility to change is defined in the GLVIA as: “the ability of the landscape receptor (whether it be the overall landscape quality or condition of a particular landscape type or area, or an individual element and or feature, or a perceptual aspect) to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and or the achievement of landscape policies and strategies” (P. 89 GLVIA).

The susceptibility of landscape receptors to change should be determined using the below table from **Very High** to **Low**.

SUCCEPTILTY TO CHANGE	ASSESEMNT CRITERIA
Very High	• Landscape with very strong landscape structure. • Landscape with no or few detracting features. • Typical nationally designated e.g. National Parks, ANOB or SSSI.
High	• Landscape with strong landscape structure. • High degree of enclosure or intimacy. • Few detracting features. • Landscape components not easily replaced. • Landscape with low capacity to accommodate development due to the interaction of vegetation, topography and built form. • Typical examples may be of national, regional or local importance.
Medium	• Landscape with good landscape structure, with some detracting features. • Medium degree of enclosure and intimacy. • Some detracting features or evidence of recent change. - Landscape and components that can be replaced or substituted. • Typical example may be of district or local importance.
Low	• Sites where there is evidence of previous landscape change. • Landscapes with high capacity to accommodate development. • Landscape and components that can be easily replaced or substituted. - Landscapes where detracting features are dominant on the landscape character.

Table 02: Criteria for assessing Landscape Susceptibility to Change.

Supporting Statement

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY:

Landscape sensitivity is the sensitivity of the landscape character to the proposed development and the resulting change. The sensitivity of a landscape is reached by cross referencing the identified susceptibility to change against the value of the landscape and will result in a figure from **Very High** to **Negligible**. (see below table 03).

	LANDSCAPE VALUE					
SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE		Exceptional	Good	Ordinary	Poor	Very Poor
	Very High	Very High	High	High / Medium	X	X
	High	High	High	Medium / High	Medium / Low	X
	Medium	High / Medium	Medium / High	Medium	Low / Medium	Low
	Low	X	Low / Medium	Low / Medium	Low	Low / Negligible
	Negligible	X	X	Low	Low / Negligible	Negligible

Table 03: Criteria for assessing Landscape Sensitivity.

MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE:

Magnitude of change is the degree to which the proposals alter the character of the existing landscape. This change can be categorised as **high, medium, low, negligible** (see below table 04). When assessing the magnitude of change consideration is given to: Size and scale of development, Extent of development, Permanency of proposals i.e. will the impact be in the short term or long term and are changes permanent or reversible, changes to key characteristics, and proposed mitigation.

MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE	CRITERIA
High	<i>Total loss of key landscape characteristics.</i>
Medium	<i>Moderate alteration to key landscape characteristic.</i>
Low	<i>Low alteration to key characteristics.</i>
Negligible	<i>Minimal alteration to key characteristics</i>

Table 04: Magnitude of Landscape Change.

LANDSCAPE EFFECTS:

The landscape effects are reached by cross referencing the sensitivity with the magnitude of change. This should be done using the table below (table 05). The significance of landscape effects can be interpreted in terms of the landscape impact. The impact is qualified on a scale from **major** to **negligible** and can be either a beneficial or adverse impact on the landscape. Consideration is given to direct and indirect impacts, duration of impact from the proposed development from Year 1 (practical completion) to 15+ years, a judgement is made on whether proposals can be mitigated or not, and whether the result of the mitigation is beneficial.

	MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE				
		High	Medium	Low	Negligible
SENSITIVITY	High	Major	Major / Moderate	Moderate	Slight / Moderate
	Medium	Major / Moderate	Moderate	Slight / Moderate	Slight
	Low	Moderate	Slight / Moderate	Slight	Slight / Negligible
	Negligible	Slight / Moderate	Slight	Slight / Negligible	Negligible

Table 05: Assessing Landscape Effects.

Supporting Statement

VISUAL RECEPTOR VALUE:

In order to assess the effects of proposals on a Visual receptor, it is important to first establish the value of the receptor. This is a similar assessment and table to that used in the Landscape Assessment. The value of the receptor is measured by considering character, landscape type and key characteristics. This is to be undertaken for each receptor individually using the below table (06).

VISUAL QUALITY	TYPICAL CRITERIA	IMPORTANCE	TYPE	CHARACTERISTIC
Exceptional	• View from a high valued landscape known for it's visual amenity.	International / National	• National Park • ANOB	• High value landscape valued nationally or internationally for its visual amenity. • Usually open, exposed, remote and tranquil with few/no man-made features.
Good	• A view from other valued landscapes.	Regional / Local	• Local Designation	• Medium value landscape or a regionally important recreation facility or route. • Clear characteristic elements. Includes important factor as identified in Box 5.1 of GLVIA.
Ordinary	• View from an ordinary landscape and is not rare.	Local	• No designations • Does not include important factors as identified in Box 5.1 of GLVIA	• View from medium low value landscape with considerable influence by man that maybe valued locally. • With incongruous elements
Poor	• A view of low importance or value.	Local	• No designations • Does not include important factors as identified in Box 5.1 of GLVIA	• View with low importance or value with a small number of characteristic elements. • Degraded landscape
Very Poor	• View of very low importance and rarity.	Local	• No designations • Does not include important factors as identified in Box 5.1 of GLVIA	• View with very low to no value with a small number of characteristic elements and heavily degraded.

Table 06: Criteria for assessing Receptor Value.

VISUAL RECEPTOR SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE:

Susceptibility to change considers the proposals impact on the individual receptor as well as the impact on the user who may be experiencing the view. The activity, location, distance form the receptor, time of year etc can effect the receptors susceptibility to change. This is assessed using a four-point scale from **Negligible** to **High**, this is shown in the table below (07).

SUCCEPTILTIIY TO CHANGE	CRITERIA
High	<i>Receptors include residents experiencing principal views from dwellings, recreational users focusing on high quality landscape (walkers, cyclists) on bridleways, national trails, primary footpaths/ cycleways, people experiencing views of important landscape features of physical, cultural or historic interest, beauty spots and picnic areas.</i>
Medium	<i>Road users and train passengers with views of affected landscape, residents experiencing secondary views, users of secondary footpaths/cycleways through recreational countryside experiencing views, outdoor recreational users focusing on activity (golf, shooting, sailing) with some appreciation of the landscape.</i>
Low	<i>Viewers engaged in outdoor recreational activities, focusing on the activity with very little appreciation for the landscape.</i>
Negligible	<i>Workers, users of facilities and commercial buildings focused on other activities, i.e at work.</i>

Table 07: Criteria for assessing Receptor Susceptibility to Change.

VISUAL RECEPTOR SENSITIVITY:

There is a similarity to the assessment of Landscape Sensitivity. When assessing a visual receptor, a number of aspects will be considered and recorded including; Sensitivity of receptor, Distance from site, Visible extent of the proposed development, Change in character of the view compared to existing, Impact in winter and summer, scale or magnitude of change and duration of change (consideration of impact at year 0 and year 15 plus), and Proposed mitigation.

The sensitivity of a landscape is reached by cross referencing the identified susceptibility to change against the value of the receptor and will result in a figure from **Very High** to **Negligible**. (See below table 08).

	RECEPTOR VALUE					
SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE		Exceptional	Good	Ordinary	Poor	Very Poor
	High	Very High	High	High / Medium	Medium	Medium / Low
	Medium	High	High / Medium	Medium	Medium / Low	Low
	Low	High / Medium	Medium	Medium / Low	Low	Low / Negligible
	Negligible	Medium	Medium / Low	Low	Low / Negligible	Negligible

Table 08: Criteria for assessing Receptor Sensitivity.

VISUAL MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE:

A similar system of scoring the magnitude of change and significance is applied. It considers the field of vision, the proportion or number of views affected, the duration of each viewpoint, or a sequence of viewpoints that may have transient views (e.g. along a road) as explained in the below table (09). For this assessment visual impacts have only been considered from publically accessible viewpoints.

MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE	CRITERIA
High	<i>The proposed development will result in an extensive and/or highly conspicuous change to, or within, a view. That may include where a development would become a dominant feature, or where there is a substantive change in the view's amenity, character, and/or composition relative to the existing context.</i>
Medium	<i>The proposed development will be clearly visible, and may be conspicuous, but does not substantively change the view's baseline amenity, character, and/or composition.</i>
Low	<i>The proposed development will be only partially visible, and/or the resultant change to amenity, character, and/or composition is slight.</i>
Negligible	<i>The proposed development are inconspicuous, and/ or will result in little to-no alteration to the existing amenity, character, and/ or composition of the views.</i>

Table 09: Magnitude of Visual Effects.

VISUAL EFFECTS:

The significance of visual effects is quantified in the below table (10) by cross referencing the sensitivity with the magnitude of change. The impact is qualified as either beneficial or adverse, and on a scale from **major** to **negligible** impact on the view. Consideration is given to direct and indirect impacts, duration of impact over life cycle of proposed development from construction to residual impacts post 15 years. The findings will inform the refinement of the design proposals.

	MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE				
		High	Medium	Low	Negligible
SENSITIVITY	High	Major	Major / Moderate	Moderate	Slight / Moderate
	Medium	Major / Moderate	Moderate	Slight / Moderate	Slight
	Low	Moderate	Slight / Moderate	Slight	Slight / Negligible
	Negligible	Slight / Moderate	Slight	Slight / Negligible	Negligible

Table 10: Assessing Visual Effects.

Site Introduction

The site is located and accessed from Markfield Lane approximately 11km west of Leicester and 1.5km north of Botcheston. The site is currently allocated as Countryside in the Site allocations and development management policies DPD - borough wide policies map. The site lies within LCA Area B: Charnwood Fringe as defined in the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Landscape Character Assessment and the Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield as defined in the Natural England's National Character Area Assessment. These are explored further in the following Landscape Value and Character assessment.

The existing site is adjacent to Forest Hill golf and conference centre (BOT05) located to the north, Polebrook and Crow Woodland (BOT06) located to the north and The Coppice (BOT07) located to the south east. To the east of the site is land planted with woodland as part of the National Forest. To the south east lies open fields and Kirby Grange.

The central areas of the site consist of open untreated heavily graded earth and manicured grassland. These areas are segmented north and south by a large native hedgerow and access track. The site lies directly adjacent to and opens up onto Forest Hill Golf Course to the north with no physical boundary. The eastern boundary is delineated by a large hedgerow and is adjacent to a National Forest planted woodland. There is no physical southern boundary between the site and a remaining area of open untreated graded earth. The western boundary is delineated by a large evergreen Leylandii hedge with a gravel parking area behind, associated with Forest Hill golf course.

The surrounding locality of the site is generally mixed with open agricultural fields, farms and woodland with urban sprawl becoming more prominent to the east. The M1 motorway, railway, Merrylees industrial estate and several small settlements can be found within approximately 4km of the site including Bocheston, Thornton, Bagworth and Desford that contain residential housing, industrial areas, shops, schools, pubs, sports facilities and other associated urban infrastructure. These settlements, local businesses and dwellings are connected by typical B-roads and country roads. Historically, the site was part of a much more open landscape of agricultural fields. The landscape has become more enclosed through National Forest planting and development in recent years.

Site Introduction

Numerous public footpaths and local trails can be found to the local landscape including The National Forest Long Distance footpath, Leicestershire Round, Substrans cycle route 63, on road cycle routes and other public footpaths. Footpath R35 intersects Forest Hill golf course, runs along the National Forest woodland and connects back to Markfield Lane. Other landscape features include Bury Camp, Country Park, Thornton reservoir, Moat, Martinshaw Wood and Kirby Muxloe Castle (remains of) that are all present in amongst the surrounding fabric of the mixed countryside. See Local Footpaths & Recreational Ways Map on page 29 for further information.

The site is located approximately 136m above sea level. The site's overall topography is relatively flat with a gradual fall from north to south from approx 137m above sea level at the north end to 135m at the southern end. The more detailed topography consists of undulating sections and graded level sections where contouring have been carried out. From the northern boundary, the earth mounds by approx 2m, then descends to the existing access track and the new access track. This then raises back up again to a more consistent level that extends to the southern boundary. Existing and surrounding infrastructure networks and mature vegetation also restrict and create limited views of the site from relatively close proximity.

The countryside to the surrounding areas contains typical rural field patterns with typical mature and native vegetation to boundaries, infrastructure and to footpaths/bridleways networks. The vegetation styles to this wider landscape include large trees, mature native hedgerows, large tree groups and larger areas of mature woodland that are also present within the landscape. Additional vegetation including mature trees, shrubs and amenity hedges can be found in and around the local residential settlements and their open spaces. The adjacent Forest Hill Golf Course landscape makes a valuable contribution to the locality.

Landscape Value

LANDSCAPE VALUE:

Using the site analysis and wider site context, we can assess the existing landscape quality of the Site, the Setting and the Landscape Character Area to establish a baseline.

Landscape Quality (condition): The site is located in a predominantly rural landscape however the immediate landscape context to the north east is more recreational (Forest Hill golf course and associated infrastructure). To the immediate south is a mature National Forest Woodland. The remaining landscape to the north and west is open agricultural field. The existing site landscape features includes unsurfaced graded earth, open manicured grassland, an evergreen hedgerow and a large mixed native hedgerow.

The site's landscape quality is predominantly poor due because of the large area of unsurfaced, heavily graded earth. The remaining open areas are manicured grassland associated with the golf course that offer little bio-diversity and do not represent the typical local landscape character. Other landscape features include a large Leylandii hedgerow offering little aesthetic or ecological quality. However, the site also possesses a large, mature, mixed native hedgerow with a high landscape quality. The hedgerow softens the site onto the neighbouring National Forest Woodland and provides good bio-diversity and ecological value.

Scenic Quality: The site itself has low quality with few scenic attributes. The site has little in terms of landscape features and lacks maturity, colour or any distinctive character and is not typical to the local landscape.

The site does offer views out of the site of mature woodland (off site National Forest woodland) and Forest Hill golf course, however, this quality is reduced by the view of the Clubhouse service areas, detracting from the rural setting.

Rarity: The site does not contain any rare elements or features.

Representativeness: The landscape contains a good quality native hedgerow that is a typical feature of the Charnwood Fringe Character Area. The alignment of the hedge relates to the edge of a redundant farm track and is no longer a relevant feature within the local landscape.

Landscape Value

- **Conservation interests:** There is no historical designation or identification of the site having any conservation interest.
- **Recreation Value:** The surrounding landscape contains recreational areas in the form of the golf course, public footpaths and public rights of way that have a minor influence on the setting of the site. However, the site does not contain any public access.
- **Perceptual Aspects:** The site's untreated and graded earth detracts from any tranquility or wildness. The native hedgerow is the only high quality feature present on the site. The site's proximity to the golf course and open boundaries, means the site does not feel screened or separated from the surrounding infrastructure including car parks, roads and the services areas of the clubhouse.
- **Associations:** The site is not associated with any particular person, historical event or artist.

The above analysis demonstrates that the landscape value of the proposed site is predominantly Poor with one Good feature. This is due to the heavily modified and graded untreated earth, poor quality manicured grassland offering little bio-diversity or quality. The site does contain the high quality feature in the form of the large native hedgerow but this is proportionally low contribution to the overall value of the site.

The site setting is of higher quality with distinct patterns and clear rural landscape type but is however detracted by the golf course and the busy Markfield Lane resulting in a Good / Ordinary Landscape Quality

Landscape Character

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER:

The following information will explore the Landscape Character areas the site is related to and situated in, including national, regional, and local landscape character. This information, alongside the site and local context, will be used to establish a baseline. The baseline will then be used to assess and establish the effect if any, the development will have on the landscape.

Natural England's National Character Assessment

The site is located within the 'Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield': Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 71 as per Natural England's National Character Assessment.

The National Character Assessment defines the areas as the following; *'The Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield landform consists of a plateau with unrestricted views of shallow valleys and gentle ridges that become less pronounced in the south due to a layer of glacial till. To the east the land rises steeply, affording views of the Charnwood National Character Area (NCA). Ancient woodland straddles part of the boundary in the north, where the land falls away affording views of the wooded rolling landscape of the Melbourne Parklands NCA. The River Mease Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) forms part of the boundary with the Mease/Sence Lowlands NCA in the south-west and the Leicestershire Vales NCA forming a less visually defined border in the south.'*

'The area has a developing woodland character that is heavily influenced by the work of The National Forest initiative, which augments locally dense riparian woodland and prominent amenity trees around settlements with developing woodland on former colliery sites.'

Key characteristics of the NCA include the following;

- The landscape is unenclosed with shallow valleys, subdued sandstone ridges and a gently undulating plateau.
- There are heavy, poorly draining soils over the Coal Measures and mudstones of the Mercia Mudstone Group, and free-draining soils on the sandstone ridges.

Landscape Character

- The area forms part of a regional watershed between the River Mease to the south and the River Soar to the east and has many minor, swift flowing streams draining the area, for example Saltersford Brook and Rothley Brook. Flooded clay pits and mining have resulted in many subsidence pools or flashes, which in combination with Thornton Reservoir provide valuable open water sites for nature conservation and recreation.
- The area has a developing woodland character that is heavily influenced by the work of The National Forest initiative, which augments locally dense riparian woodland and prominent amenity trees around settlements with developing woodland on former colliery sites.
- Small- to medium-sized fields occur with a wide variation in field pattern, including some narrow, curved fields that preserve the strips of the open field system. Where arable production predominates, fields have been enlarged. Hedgerows are low with a few scattered hedgerow trees and in places show the effects of former open cast workings.
- Agriculture comprises a mixture of arable and mixed sheep and beef units and, to a lesser extent, dairy. Combinable crops are grown on the freer-draining soils. Potatoes are grown in rotation on the heavier soils around Measham and Packington.
- There is remnant acid grassland over sandstone with neutral grassland in the valleys, and acid heathland on open mosaic habitats on previously developed land, particularly colliery spoil. The River Mease SSSI and SAC has internationally important spined loach and bullhead fish and nationally important, white-clawed crayfish, otter, and aquatic plants such as water crowfoot.
- The area is easily accessible by major roads and rail and is close to East Midlands Airport. Long-distance recreational routes include the Ivanhoe Way, the Leicestershire Round, and a wide network of local trails and footpaths associated with the recreational assets of The National Forest.

Landscape Character

Hinckley and Bosworth Landscape Character Assessment, September 2017

In the Hinckley and Bosworth Landscape Character Assessment prepared by Land Use Consultants (LUC), the site falls within Landscape Character Area B: Charnwood Fringe. The document identifies and explores aspects of the landscape including location & boundaries, landscape character, cultural influences etc.

The following bullet points are key characteristics of Charnwood fringe as described in the LCA.

- Gently undulating landform with small plateaus on higher ground and rising to the adjacent Charnwood Forest area to the east.
- Contrast between areas which are visually open and enclosed depending on the elevation of the landscape and the presence of woodlands and vegetation.
- Large scale irregular field pattern of mainly arable and some pasture, with smaller fields around settlements. Fields enclosed by hedgerows with scattered trees.
- Industrial heritage of quarrying and mining resulting in areas of restored land.
- Part of the National Forest and Charnwood Forest with areas of new woodland plantations associated with former industrial areas.
- Dispersed pattern of former mining villages following a linear pattern on ridge tops, either located close to a colliery or providing housing for mine workers. Good public access and footpath network throughout, especially within National Forest area.
- Predominantly rural landscape with arable and rough set-aside, influenced by industrial / urban features such as masts, poles, and pylons.

Site Location & Context

KEY



Site Location.



NORTH

Wider Topography

KEY

- 120 - 130m
- 130 - 140m
- 140 - 150m
- 150m +
- Site Location, Approx 136m above sea level

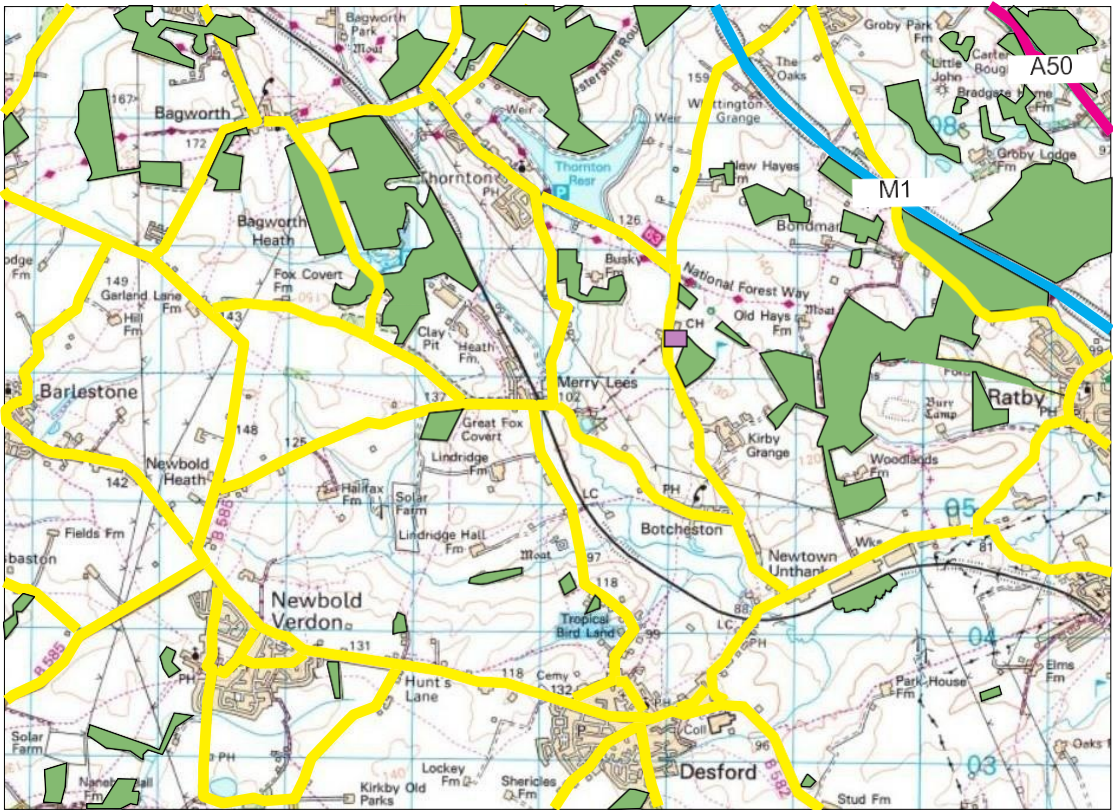


Wider Vegetation Patterns & Site Circulation

KEY

-  Site Location.
-  Substantial coniferous and Non-coniferous Trees / Vegetation
-  Motorway
-  A - Road
-  Secondary Road

Important:
A high number of existing mature trees and large pockets of thick vegetation are located near and within housing areas, to the local infrastructure. They are not shown at this scale but provide an important contribution within the existing landscape and this assessment.

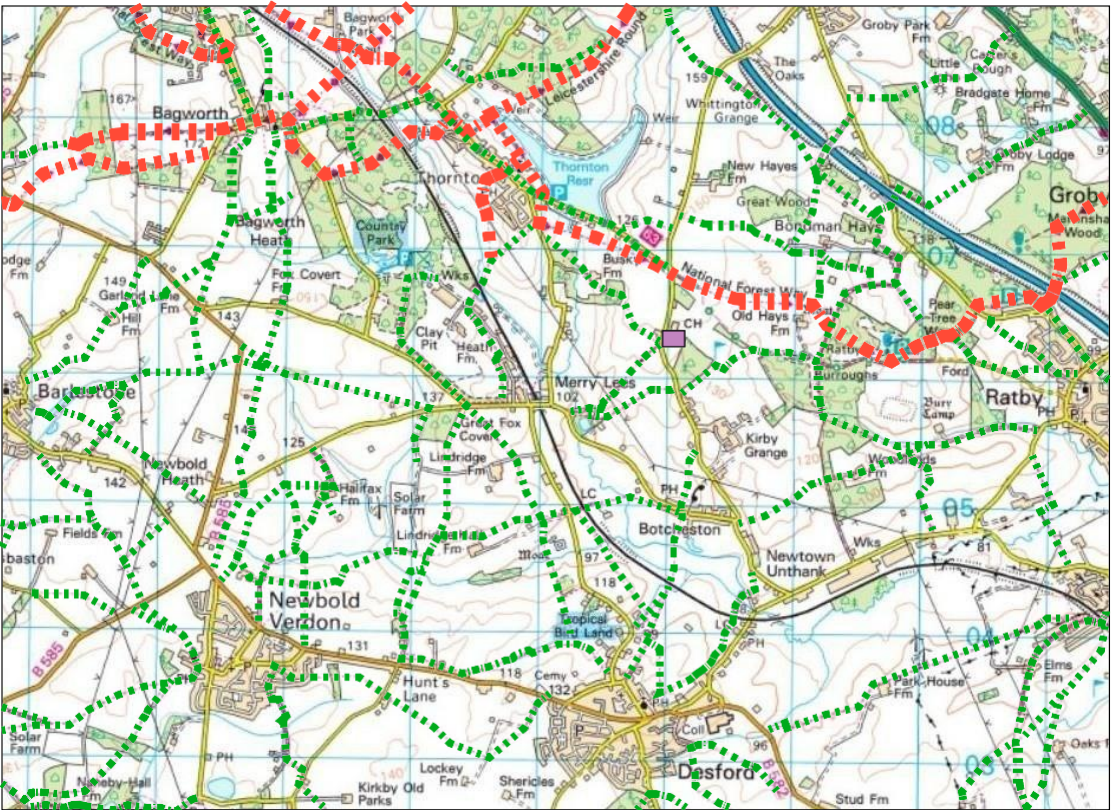


NORTH

Local Footpaths & Recreational Ways

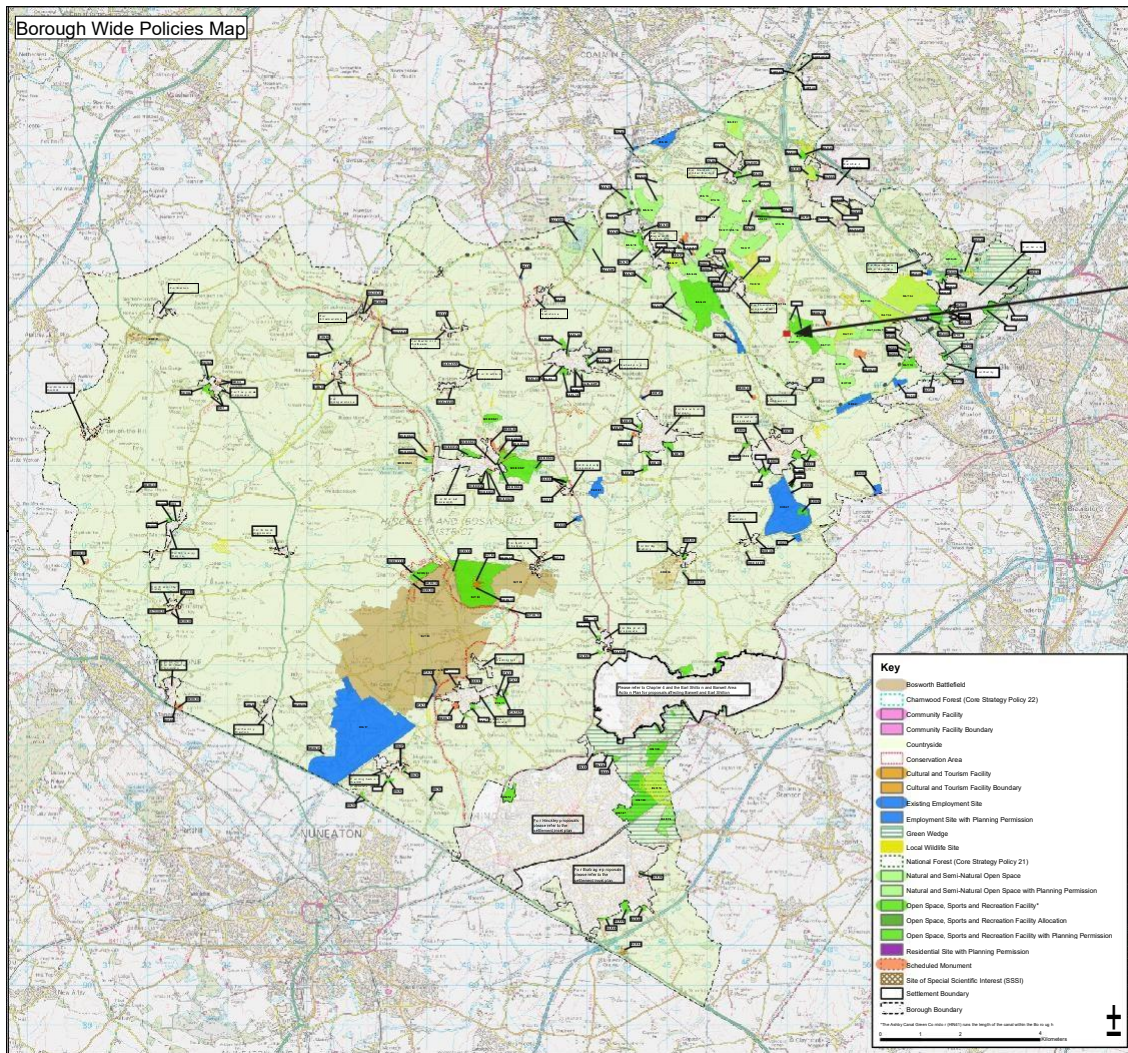
KEY

-  Site Location.
-  Public Footpaths, Bridleways and other routes with public access
-  Recreational Way, including The National forest way and Leicestershire Round



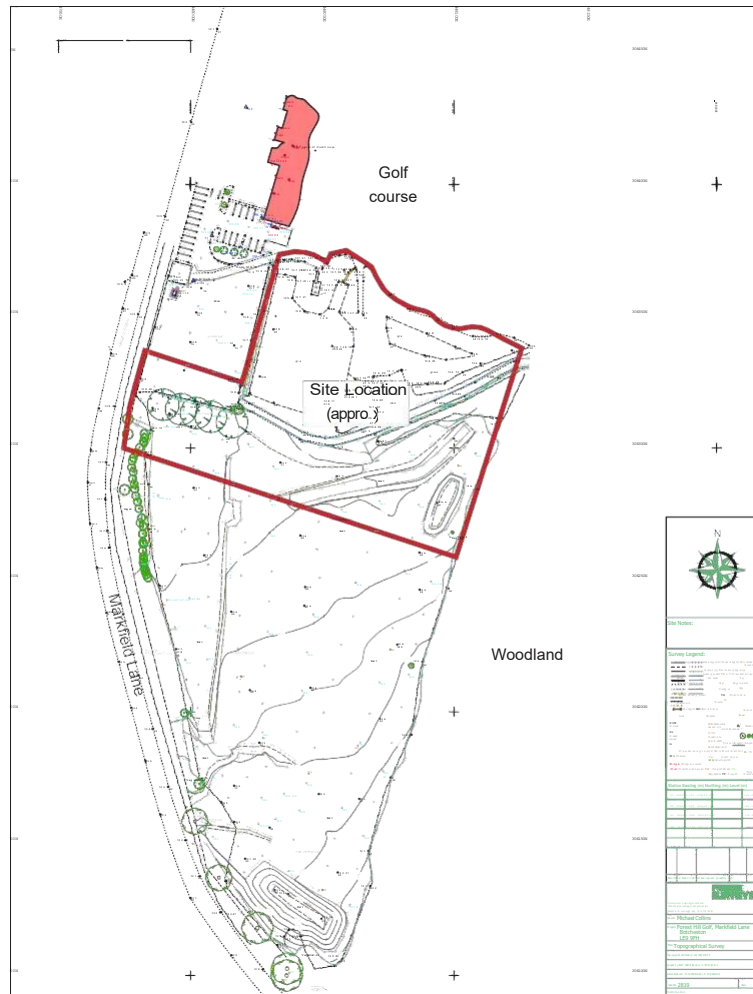
NORTH

Borough Policies Map



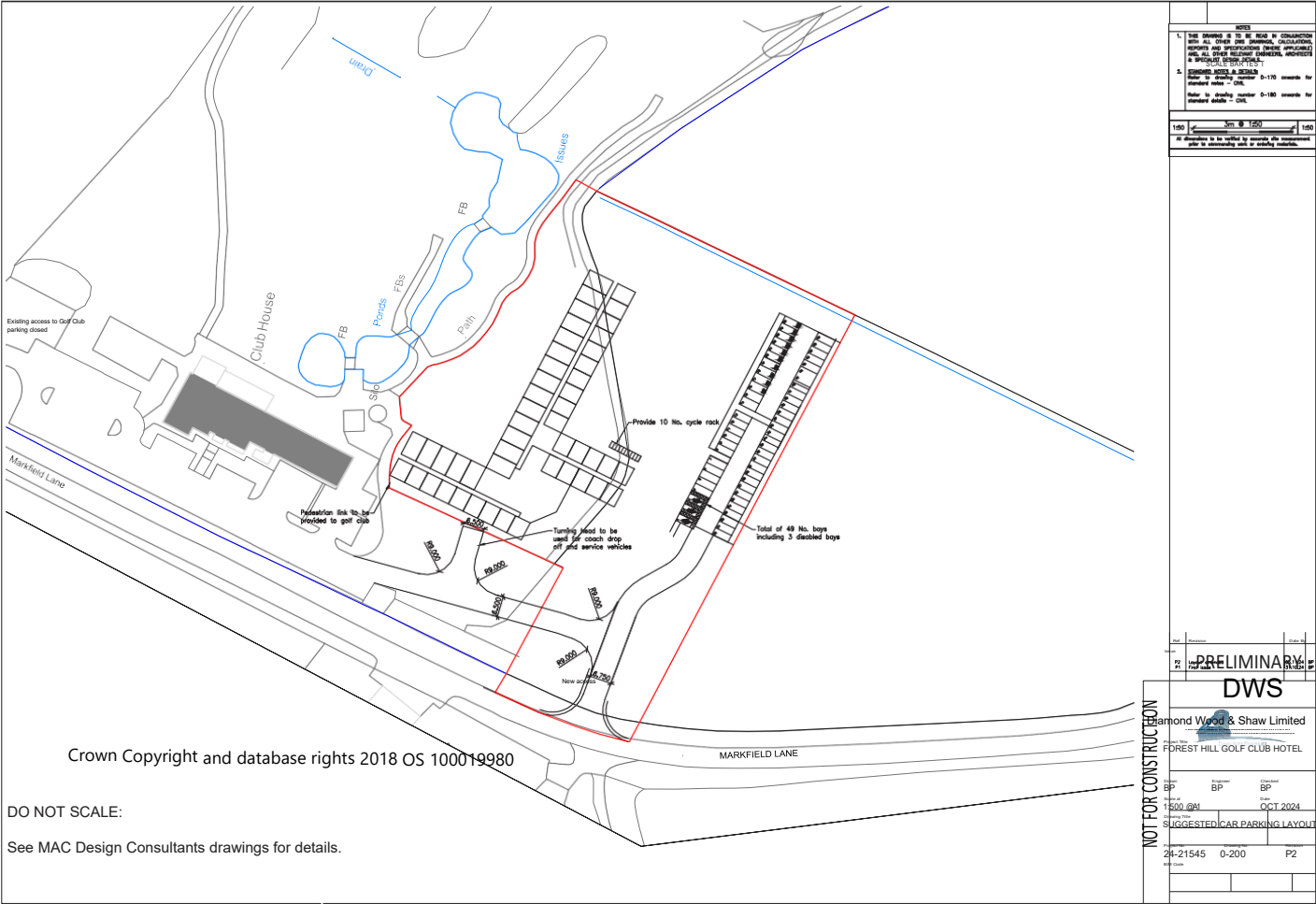
Proposed Site Location
(in Open Countryside)

Site Survey



Architect's Site Proposals

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the author and is not to be used for any other purpose without the written consent of the author.
Represented to 1:100 scale unless otherwise stated.



Existing Local Character

KEY



Site boundary



Existing residential housing



Site views, see photographs

- 1.) Existing site View 1
- 2.) Existing site View 2
- 3.) Existing site View 3
- 4.) Existing site View 4



NORTH



DO NOT SCALE:

Existing Site Views

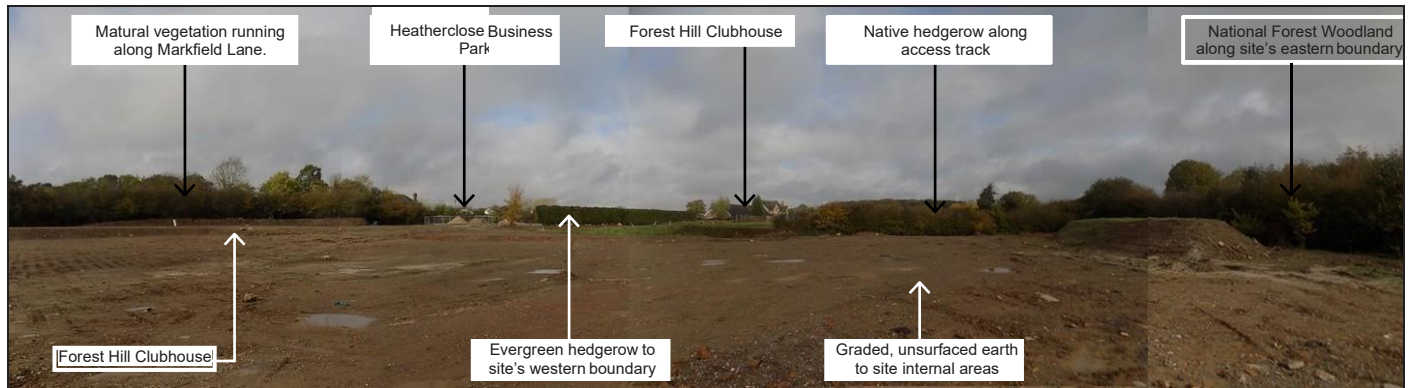


01 - View south east of proposed site from Forest Hill Golf Course car park.



02 - View north from within the proposed site.

Existing Site Views



03 - View north east from within the proposed site.



04 - View south west from the site's northern boundary.

Receptor Locations Local

KEY



Site Location



Receptor Number & Location

1.) Golf Course Entrance (Markfield Lane)

2.) Public Footpath

3.) National Forest Way

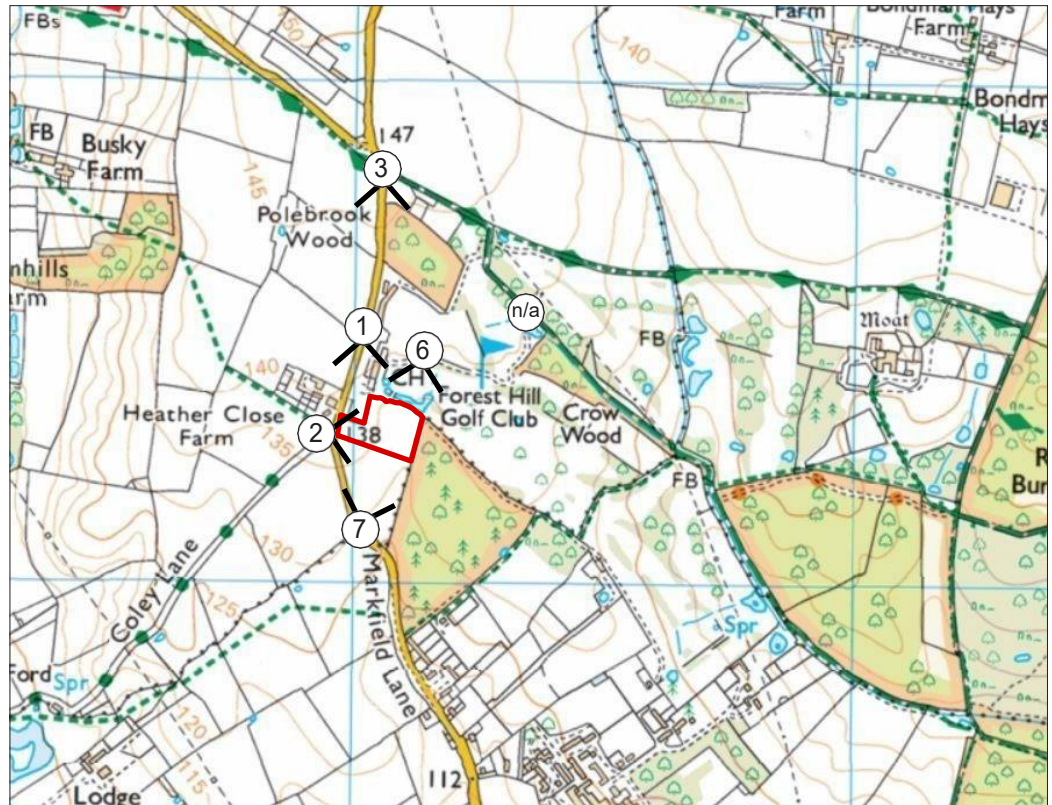
6.) 18th Hole, Forest Hill Golf Course

7.) Markfield Lane (south of site)

n/a.) Various public footpaths, open spaces and residential areas visited but proposed site views are 'not applicable' because of distance and obstructed views.



NORTH



Receptor Locations Wider

KEY

 Site Location

 Receptor Number & Location

4.) Oakwood Close/Public Footpath

5.) Cemetery, Hunts Lane

n/a.) Various public footpaths, open spaces and residential areas visited but proposed site views are 'not applicable' because of distance and obstructed views.



Landscape Effects Table

	LANDSCAPE IMPACT ASSESSMENT				
RECEPTOR	RECEPTOR SENSITIVITY	MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE (YEAR 0)	MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE (YEAR 15+)	LANDSCAPE EFFECTS (YEAR 0)	LANDSCAPE EFFECTS (YEAR 15+)
Site	Low	Low	Negligible	Slight	Slight / Negligible
Setting	Medium	Low	Negligible	Slight / Moderate	Slight
Character Area	Medium	Negligible	Negligible	Slight	Slight

Table 11: Landscape Effects Table

Assessing Significance of Landscape Effects Table

	LANDSCAPE MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE				
SENSITIVITY		High	Medium	Low	Negligible
	High	Major	Major / Moderate	Moderate	Slight / Moderate
	Medium	Major / Moderate	Moderate	Slight / Moderate	Slight
	Low	Moderate	Slight / Moderate	Slight	Slight / Negligible
	Negligible	Slight / Moderate	Slight	Slight / Negligible	Negligible

Table 13: Significance of Landscape Impacts.
(Using the 'Landscape Effects' information gained in Table 11, the above shows the overall results for landscape impact at year 1 on the Site, Setting and LCA.

	LANDSCAPE MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE				
SENSITIVITY		High	Medium	Low	Negligible
	High	Major	Major / Moderate	Moderate	Slight / Moderate
	Medium	Major / Moderate	Moderate	Slight / Moderate	Slight
	Low	Moderate	Slight / Moderate	Slight	Slight / Negligible
	Negligible	Slight / Moderate	Slight	Slight / Negligible	Negligible

Table 14: Significance of Landscape Impacts.
(Using the 'Visual Effects' information gained in Table 11, the above shows the overall results for the visual impact at year 15+ on the Site, Setting and LCA.

Assessing Significance of Landscape Effects

SITE:

The landscape sensitivity of the site is considered to be Low. This finding is because of the poor overall value of the existing site due to the unsurfaced heavily graded earth and low quality landscape vegetation. The susceptibility to change is low because of the evidence of landscape change (heavily graded and modified earth) and the site's ability to accommodate the proposed development.

The landscape magnitude of change at year 0 is low reducing to negligible by 15+ as the mitigation planting becomes established.

The significance of landscape effects at year 0 is therefore **Slight** reducing to **Slight / Negligible** by year 15+.

SETTING:

The landscape sensitivity of the setting is considered to be Medium. This finding is because of the Good / Ordinary value due to the distinct patterns and clear rural character with some detracting features. The susceptibility to change is medium because of its mixed use rural setting and the sites appropriateness to the setting.

The landscape magnitude of change at year 0 is low reducing to negligible by 15+ as the site integrates into the setting more effectively.

The significance of landscape effects at year 0 is therefore **Slight / Moderate** reducing to **Slight** by year 15+.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTERS AREA:

The landscape sensitivity of the setting is considered to be Medium. This finding is because of the Good landscape value due to the LCA with distinct patterns and clear rural character with minor incongruous elements. The susceptibility to change is medium / low because of its mixed use rural setting and the site's appropriateness to the setting.

The landscape magnitude of change at year and year 15+ is insignificant.

The significance of landscape effects at year 0 and year 15+ is therefore **Slight**.

Visual Effects Table

		VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT				
RECEPTOR	DISTANCE FROM SITE (APPROX)	RECEPTOR SENSITIVITY	MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE (YEAR 0)	MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE (YEAR 15+)	LANDSCAPE EFFECTS (YEAR 0)	LANDSCAPE EFFECTS (YEAR 15+)
1	170m	Medium	Low	Low	Slight / Moderate	Slight / Moderate
2	50m	Medium	Medium	Low	Moderate	Slight / Moderate
3	450m	High	Negligible	Negligible	Slight / Moderate	Slight / Moderate
4	1.5km	Medium	Negligible	Negligible	Slight	Slight
5	3km	Medium	Negligible	Negligible	Slight	Slight
6	70m	Medium	Negligible	Negligible	Slight	Slight
7	90m	Medium	Medium	Medium	Moderate	Moderate

Table 12: Visual Effects Table

Assessing Significance of Visual Effects Table

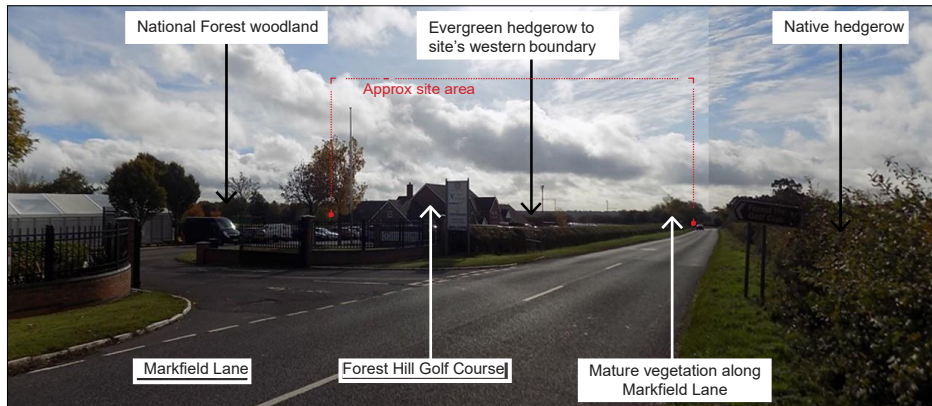
	VISUAL MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE				
SENSITIVITY		High	Medium	Low	Negligible
	High	Major	Major / Moderate	Moderate	Slight / Moderate
	Medium	Major / Moderate	Moderate	Slight / Moderate	Slight
	Low	Moderate	Slight / Moderate	Slight	Slight / Negligible
	Negligible	Slight / Moderate	Slight	Slight / Negligible	Negligible

Table 15: Significance of Visual Impacts.
(Using the 'Visual Effects' information gained in Table 12, the above shows the overall results for the visual impact at year 1 on the 7x individual visual receptors.

	VISUAL MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE				
SENSITIVITY		High	Medium	Low	Negligible
	High	Major	Major / Moderate	Moderate	Slight / Moderate
	Medium	Major / Moderate	Moderate	Slight / Moderate	Slight
	Low	Moderate	Slight / Moderate	Slight	Slight / Negligible
	Negligible	Slight / Moderate	Slight	Slight / Negligible	Negligible

Table 16: Significance of Visual Impacts.
(Using the 'Visual Effects' information gained in Table 12, the above shows the overall results for the visual impact at year 15+ on the 7x individual visual receptors.

Visuals Receptor Locations



01 - View south along Markfield Lane.

Receptor 01 - Views south along Markfield Lane near the entrance to Forest Hill Golf Course. The receptor represents views from secondary road users. The sites northern boundary is partially visible. The existing evergreen hedgerow can be seen. From this location, the rooftop of the proposed building will be visible extending to the east. Glimpsed views to the south can be achieved. Heatherclose Business Park can be seen and access from Markfield Lane to the west. The surrounding landscape contains mature trees, vegetation and native hedgerows to road boundaries.

The visual receptor sensitivity is medium, considering the value of the receptor and the users who will be effected. The users will be predominantly road users in cars and some pedestrians and cyclists experiencing secondary views with some appreciation of the landscape.

The landscape magnitude of change at year 0 and year 15+ is low.

The significance of landscape effects at year 0 and year 15+ is therefore **Slight / Moderate**.

Visuals Receptor Locations



02 - View east from public footpath of Markfield Lane.

Receptor 02 - Views experienced from a secondary public footpath on and accessed from Markfield Road. The proposed site's main entrance will be directly in front. A glimpsed view of the proposed building and associated landscape will be visible through the new entrance. This will be softened with mitigation planting. The new entrance will be created by cutting through the vegetation along with selective removal to cater for visibility splays. The remaining boundary vegetation including scattered mature trees and a thick native hedgerow running along Markfield Lane will be retained. Heatherclose Business Park access, Forest Hill Golf Course and mature woodland can be seen to the north with glimpsed distant views achievable to the south. Native hedgerows, mature trees and vegetation are visible in the surrounding landscape.

The visual receptor sensitivity is medium, considering the value of the receptor and the users who will be effected. The users will be pedestrians and cyclists on the public right of way and along Markfield lane experiencing secondary views with some appreciation of the landscape.

The landscape magnitude of change at year 0 is medium reducing to low by 15+ as the mitigation planting becomes established.

The significance of landscape effects at year 0 is therefore **Moderate** reducing to **Slight / Moderate** by year 15+.

Visuals Receptor Locations



03 - View south from the National Forest Way along Markfield Lane.

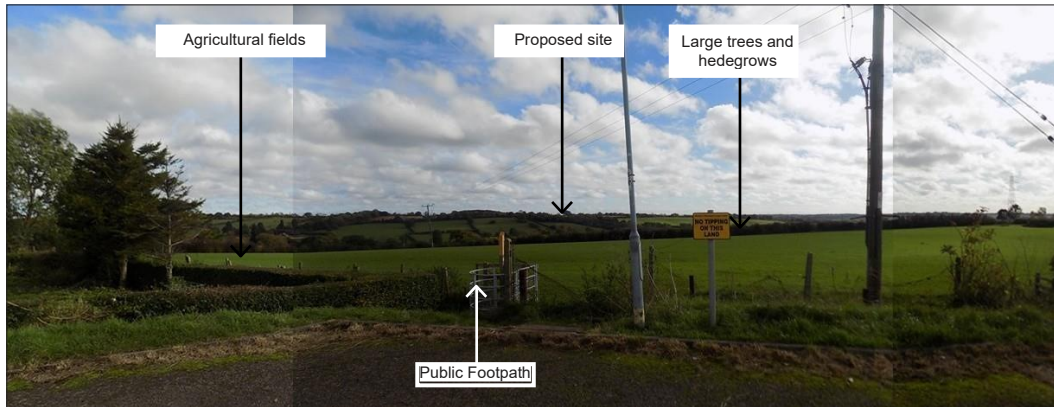
Receptor 03 - View south along Markfield Lane from a priority footpath on the National Forest Way that can be seen continuing to the east. A mature woodland can be seen in the immediate foreground that extends along Markfield Lane. The Forest Hill Golf Course can be seen to the south along with a glimpsed view of the proposed site behind. Agricultural fields and distant views can be seen to the west with mature hedgerows and mature trees defining the boundaries.

The visual receptor sensitivity is High, considering the value of the receptor and the users who will be effected. The users will be pedestrians and cyclists on the National Forest Way experiencing principal views with appreciation of the landscape.

The landscape magnitude of change at year 0 and year 15+ is negligible.

The significance of landscape effects at year 0 and year 15+ is therefore **Slight / Moderate**.

Visuals Receptor Locations



04 - Views south east from public footpath near Oakwood Close.

Receptor 04 - View south east from a secondary public footpath near Oakwood Close. The two storey clubhouse building associated with Forest Hill Golf Course can just be seen to the south east on the horizon. The site is located to the immediate south of Forest Hill and will be barely visible. Typical agricultural fields patterns can be seen throughout the landscape with mature hedgerows and trees to boundaries. Pockets of dense tree planting are also present in the landscape and can be seen breaking the horizon. Road infrastructure, fences and telephone wires are also seen in the view. To the south urban areas can be seen containing houses and other associated buildings.

The visual receptor sensitivity is medium, considering the value of the receptor and the users who will be affected. The users will be pedestrians on the public right of way experiencing secondary views with some appreciation of the landscape.

The landscape magnitude of change at year 0 and year 15+ is negligible.

The significance of landscape effects at year 0 and year 15+ is therefore **Slight**.

Visuals Receptor Locations



05 - View north east from a public footpath near Desford cemetery on Hunts lane.

Receptor 05 - Views north east towards where the site can just be made out in the distance. The cemetery on Hunts lane can be seen in the immediate foreground. Views of the surrounding landscape show varied uses and elements including large agricultural fields, mature trees and hedgerows, large pockets of woodland, road infrastructure, houses and associated buildings/infrastructure.

The visual receptor sensitivity is medium, considering the value of the receptor and the users who will be effected. The users will be pedestrians associated with Desford cemetery and road users in vehicles and on the public footpath experiencing secondary views with some appreciation of the landscape.

The landscape magnitude of change at year 0 and year 15+ is negligible.

The significance of landscape effects at year 0 and year 15+ is therefore **Slight**.

Visuals Receptor Locations



06 - Views north from Markfield Lane south of the proposed site.

Receptor 06 - Views experienced from secondary road users on Markfield Lane, 70m south of the site. A glimpsed view of the proposed building may be achievable through the adjacent mature vegetation along the road during winter months. This will be softened with mitigation planting. Heatherclose Business Park can be seen to the north. Native hedgerows, mature trees and vegetation can be seen to neighboring field boundaries and along Markfield Lane.

The visual receptor sensitivity is medium, considering the value of the receptor and the users who will be effected. The users will be predominantly road users in cars and some pedestrians and cyclists experiencing secondary views with some appreciation of the landscape.

The landscape magnitude of change at year 0 and year 15+ is negligible.

The significance of landscape effects at year 0 and year 15+ is therefore **Slight**.

Visuals Receptor Locations



07 - View south from the 18th hole on Forest Hill golf course.

Receptor 06 - View from the 18th hole on Forest Hill golf course, representing views experienced by people engaged in golf. The site can be seen to the immediate south (less than 30m away). The existing native hedgerow will be replaced with the proposed hotel building, with the building line protruding into the horizon. The proposals will be associated with the building fabric of Forest Hill golf course and mitigation planting will assist in softening this view. Grassland, parkland trees and vegetation can be seen in the foreground with the National Forest woodland to the east and other mature vegetation to the wider landscape.

The visual receptor sensitivity is Medium, considering the value of the receptor and the users who will be effected. The users will be recreational users focussing on an activity (golf) experiencing secondary views with some appreciation of the landscape.

The landscape magnitude of change at year 0 and year 15+ is Moderate because of the close proximity to the development.

The significance of landscape effects at year 0 and year 15+ is therefore **Moderate**.

Proposed Landscape Strategy

This landscape strategy has been assisted and developed by the Landscape & Visual Assessment process. The proposed landscape strategy aims to limit any negative effects the proposals may have on the landscape character and the visual receptors, and integrate the scheme into the site and the surrounding landscape fabric.

The landscape mitigation measures are required for two reasons; To soften the immediate views/receptors identified by integrating the proposals into the local landscape, and to replace and improve the existing site landscape quality.

The mitigation measures required are minimal because the impact from the proposals are limited and localized, circa 200m. This is due to the existing mature vegetation present to the site boundaries and local areas, the positioning of the hotel adjacent to Forest Hill golf course and the single storey design, and the existing topography. All of which create a contained site with very limited impact on the surrounding wider landscape. As previously determined, the landscape quality of the existing site is also poor, with the exception of the native hedgerow, again reducing the mitigation required.

The landscape strategy will aim to improve the overall landscape quality, soften views in, out and through the site, and produce a scheme that is appropriate to the local setting and wider landscape character. In addition, the relevant policies have been considered to inform the proposed scheme. These are outlined in pages 2,3 and 4 of the document. Below are details of the strategies that will be taken to integrate the proposed hotel development into the site and its surrounding landscape.

The landscape mitigation measures include several outline treatments to boundaries and internal areas of the proposed site. The proposed treatments and enhancements are typical of the surrounding landscape character and intend to extend and replicate planting already located in and amongst the site.

The northern boundary is directly adjacent to Forest Hill golf course and is currently untreated. New planting will be introduced to soften the site into the neighbouring woodland, connect to the golf course and soften views from the immediate northern locality. The mitigation will include planting of varied sizes to break up the building outline, trees and native whip/scrub planting to connect to the woodland, and more formal hedge and shrub planting to create a high quality and attractive edge onto the golf course. This will create a sustainable buffer typical of the surrounding locality. It will also increase the bio-diversity and the overall quality of the site by introducing new habitats and replace the lost native hedgerow.

Proposed Landscape Strategy

The eastern boundary comprises of a large, mature native hedgerow running along the boundary. This forms the boundary onto the neighbouring National Forest woodland. Subsequently, it is important to retain and support this boundary to soften and limit any effect the proposals may have on this character area. This boundary will be supported with woodland edge scrub and native tree planting, and wildflower meadow planting to soften the proposed building and associated hard landscape into the landscape.

The southern boundary is open with the remaining unsurfaced and heavily graded earth extending to the south. This boundary will be strengthened with a new buffer including whip planting, large and small informal tree planting, and shrub planting to create a matrix that replicates planting found in and amongst the site and the surrounding landscape fabric. These proposals will connect and soften the boundary into the adjacent existing mature boundary vegetation.

The western boundary encompasses a thick bund of native vegetation and sporadic large trees running parallel to Markfield Lane. This substantial landscape buffer and elevated positioning assists in softening views into the site from Markfield Lane and distant views from the west. The treatment will be maintained with the exception of the new site entrance. To mitigate views into the site from this location (receptor 02) and to replace lost vegetation, this boundary will be augmented with additional tree planting of varied sizes, mixed native whips, and shrub planting. This will be predominantly positioned along the new access to soften potential views into the site of the proposed building.

Finally, to internal areas of the site, linear street tree planting, ornamental shrub planting and grassland will be introduced to parking areas, roadway, footpaths, building entrances and building facades to improve the landscape quality of these areas, soften views through the site, and further break up the building structure. This proposed high quality landscape will also improve the ecological value and bio-diversity of the site and will be typical of the landscape character area.

As this soft landscape begins to establish, the site's appearance and containment will progressively improve and will eventually mitigate the negative impact from the proposals. The landscape quality of the site will be improved and will make a valued contribution to the local context and wider landscape character.

Landscape Conclusion

The LVIA for the previous application in 2020 considered an application for a development that was larger and extended more to the east of the current application site and for a building of two storeys in height. This application considers the proposed development that includes a building of a maximum of single storey and it is located in proximity to the existing built elements of the Golf Club. The following is a summary of the findings of this assessment based on the proposed development included in Figures within this report.

The natural characteristics of the site and its surrounding areas create limited views of the proposals with only significant distant views achievable from the west and south west. Visibility of the proposed development may be possible in certain long range locations however the distance of circa 3km results in the overall view of the proposals blending in to the mixed fabric of the existing landscape and visual amenity. The natural characteristics of the landscape include; the local undulating landform, agricultural fields with typical boundary vegetation, large pockets of woodland/ vegetation, infrastructure and residential fabric in relation to the site.

Smaller scale factors that are also typical to the rural landscape and the site include pockets of woodland, mature tree groups and large hedgerows that are found to field and road boundaries and amongst surrounding infrastructure. These mature vegetation patterns play an important role in the site's success and sustainability, due to the containment of views been focused within the site boundaries.

In addition to the above natural characteristics, the proposed landscape mitigation strategy (planting matrix) and strategic positioning of the proposed hotel development will mitigate and/or reduce any potential views further from all boundaries and local receptors surrounding the site.

The size and maturity of the existing vegetation that forms the site's boundaries play a vital role in the success of the proposed scheme's integration into the wider landscape. The large native hedgerow and woodland located to the eastern boundary mitigate all significant views from the east, resulting in limited mitigation measures required to soften views of the proposals. The proposed landscape to the northern boundary consists of new tree planting, whip planting, woodland meadow mix and native shrubs which will support the existing trees and create a sustainable buffer typical of the surrounding locality. Similarly, the southern boundary will receive a significant increase in vegetative cover to create a buffer, softening distant views from the south.

Landscape Conclusion

From the west is where views of the site could be achieved from a distant and elevated position as seen in Receptor 5 (Cemetery on Hunts Lane). However, it is evident that due to the maturity of the existing landscape and its natural enclosure there is limited impact on the openness of the site. Similarly, the proposed landscape mitigation measures and the mixed fabric present in the surrounding landscape result in negligible impact on the wider landscape.

The current site has undergone major earthworks operation over the recent year or so and this has resulted in a poor and degraded condition of the landscape fabric as demonstrated in the Site Views obtained during the landscape site study. The landscape proposals including new trees, shrubs, hedges, woodland seed mix and grassland will provide beneficial improvement to the landscape quality within the whilst increasing the overall ecology and bio-diversity of the proposed development.

The landscape mitigation planting proposed to the site's internal areas and the boundaries include a variety of native trees, shrubs, hedges and wildflowers supports the site's existing framework of extensive mature trees, hedges and woodland and overall this combined enhancement will assist in the proposed development becoming seamlessly integrated within the local and wider landscape character and it will not cause undue visual intrusion or detract from the overall visual amenity.



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