



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Land east of Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

R002c_2220 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Prepared by Mrs. Clare Brockhurst FLI, BSc (Hons), Dip LA on behalf of
Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd.

Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Contents

Section 1: Introduction.....	1
Credentials of assessor	1
Scope and Methodology	1
Methodology.....	2
Consequence of development	2
Baseline analysis.....	3
Sensitivity of resources and receptor	3
Consideration of the development	3
Context to this assessment	3
Planning context.....	3
Collaboration in the design process	3
Deficiencies/omissions	3
Section 2: Baseline situation	4
Landscape character	4
National scale	4
Regional scale.....	4
East Midlands Regional Character Assessment, 2010	4
Charnwood Forest Landscape Character Assessment, June 2019	5
Hinckley & Bosworth Borough	5
Landscape Character Assessment 2017	5
Landscape Sensitivity Study 2017	5
Site specific landscape components.....	5
Visual character and views	8
Extent of visual envelope	8
Representative viewpoints	8
Visual composition.....	8
Section 3: Evaluation of the Sensitivity of Resources and Receptors.....	11
Landscape value	11
National value.....	11
District value	11
Local value.....	11
Landscape susceptibility	12
Landscape sensitivity of the site and its context	12
Value attached to the views.....	16
Susceptibility to visual change	16
Visual sensitivity.....	16
Section 4: Design evolution and mitigation measures.....	18
Design evolution and recommendations	18
Design approach and integration - landscape and visual character	18
Green Infrastructure	20
Hinckley and Bosworth Green infrastructure Strategy (July 2020)	20
Hinckley and Bosworth Adopted Core Strategy 2009	20
Design approach and integration - Green Infrastructure.....	20
Summary of mitigation measures	20
Prevention/avoidance	20
Reduction/minimisation	21
Enhancement measures.....	21
Iterative design approach.....	21

Section 5: Magnitude of change	23
Magnitude of landscape change	23
Lighting effects	23
Magnitude of visual change	27
Section 6: Consequence of development.....	29
Significance of landscape effects	31
Significance of visual effects	31
Section 7: Summary.....	32

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Study area.....	2
Figure 2.1: Geology	5
Figure 2.2: Topography	7
Figure 2.3: Private views across the site.	8
Figure 2.4: Zone of Theoretical Visibility	9
Figure 2.5: Photographic viewpoints.....	10
Figure 4.1: Landscape and visual recommendations	19
Figure 4.2: Extract of Figure 5.1 GI strategy	20

List of Tables

Table 3.1: Landscape Sensitivity Evaluation.....	14
Table 3.2: Visual Sensitivity Evaluation	17
Table 4.2: Green Infrastructure provisions	21
Table 5.1: Magnitude of Landscape Change	23
Table 5.2: Magnitude of visual change	27
Table 6.1: Significance of effect - Landscape	29
Table 6.2: Significance of effect - Visual	30

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Development framework plan
Appendix 2: Criteria and Glossary
Appendix 3: Bibliography
Appendix 4: Extracted material from published characterisations.
4a: East Midlands Regional Landscape Character Assessment
4b: Charnwood Forest Landscape Character Assessment
4c: Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Landscape Character Assessment
4d: Hinckley & Bosworth Landscape sensitivity Study
Appendix 5: Photoviewpoints 1-13 (summer views)
Appendix 6: Photoviewpoints 1-13 (winter views)
Appendix 7: Consideration of policy matters

Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

The contents of this report are valid at the time of writing. Leyton Place shall not be liable for any use of the report other than for the purposes for which it was produced. Owing to the dynamic nature of landscape resources, if more than 12 months have elapsed since the date of the report, further advice must be taken before you rely on the contents of the report. Notwithstanding any provision of the Leyton Place Limited terms and conditions, Leyton Place Ltd shall not be liable for any losses (howsoever incurred) arising incurred as a result of reliance by the client or any third party on the report more than 12 months after the date of the report.

Copyright © 2025 Leyton Place Ltd. All rights reserved.

Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared by Leyton Place Limited (LPL) on behalf of Taylor Wimpey UK Limited (the applicant) in respect of development of land at Ratby Lane, Markfield (the Site).

Credentials of assessor

- 1.2 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will be prepared by a Fellow of the Landscape Institute (FLI) with more than 30 years professional experience in the field of landscape planning. The assessor has a BSc (Hons) degree in Landscape Management from the University of Reading, a Post Graduate diploma in Landscape Architecture, she achieved chartered status with the LI in 1991.
- 1.3 The assessor has prepared more than 100 LVIA's in her career and has appeared at more than 100 planning inquiries as an expert witness on Landscape and Visual matters. Her approach to assessing landscape and visual effects has been subject to review and critique by her peers and the planning inspectorate.
- 1.4 The approach adopted in the preparation of the LVIA has been scrutinized by an independent chartered member of the Landscape Institute using the LI's Technical Guidance Note 1/20, 2020 and has been subject to review by landscape advisors in a number of planning authorities.

Scope and Methodology

- 1.5 The Site is centered on National Grid Reference SK 49755 09519 and is within the administrative boundary of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council. The site extends to 5.38 ha.
- 1.6 An outline planning application, with access in detail (and all other matters reserved), is being made in the following manner:
- Up to 130 new homes
 - 1.38 ha of public open space

- 1.7 Due to the outline nature of the scheme the assessment of effects is based on the illustrative masterplan (**Appendix 1**) which accompany the application. Furthermore, of relevance to this assessment is the landscape strategy relating to the provision and distribution of multifunctional green open space and the accompanying design intent as articulated in the DAS relating to specific aspects of the proposals, namely:

Land Use & Amount - the building / Site use or uses proposed for the development & the maximum amount of development;

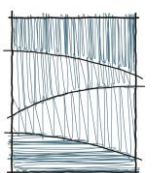
Scale of Development - the maximum and minimum height limits for each development zone in relation to their surroundings; and

Layout of Development - the way in which development zones or building plots, routes and open spaces are provided, situated, and orientated in relation to each other.

- 1.8 The purpose of this LVIA is to describe the landscape and visual baseline situation, set out the construction and operational impacts of the project, including mitigation measures.¹ and provide information regarding the likely consequences on the landscape and visual resources arising from the impacts identified. This report also considers further mitigation measure that are not integrated within the development proposals.
- 1.9 The objective of the assessment process has been to ensure that the analysis of the landscape and visual context (baseline situation) informs and guides the iterative design process.
- 1.10 As noted at paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 in the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, third edition (GLVIA 3), the interrelated design and assessment process has strength, as it links the analysis of environmental issues with steps to improve the siting, layout, and design of the scheme.

- 1.11 In preparing this document, reference has been made to the officer's comments on the landscape and visual issues in respect of a previous application [15/00889/OUT] in the same location, and more recent comments made for the permitted development to the south of Markfield [20/01283/FUL], to determine the scope of this assessment.
- 1.12 The Study Area for the project is shown on **Figure 1.1** and has been informed by the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV, See **Figure 2.8**), consideration of the published landscape character assessment and fieldwork. Locations outside of the Study Area have been visited to explore distant views. This analysis has confirmed the limited extent of the Study Area relevant to the site and the proposals.
- 1.13 Critically the proposed development does not trigger the preparation of an Environmental Statement. The significance of effects should be appreciated in this context. The text which follows explains where the author of this report has determined those matters which are scoped out of the assessment process.
- 1.14 The glossary of terms is set out in **Appendix 2**. **Appendix 3** contains the bibliography.

¹ For the purposes of this report there is a distinction in terminology between impacts - the action being taken, and effects - the result of that action.



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

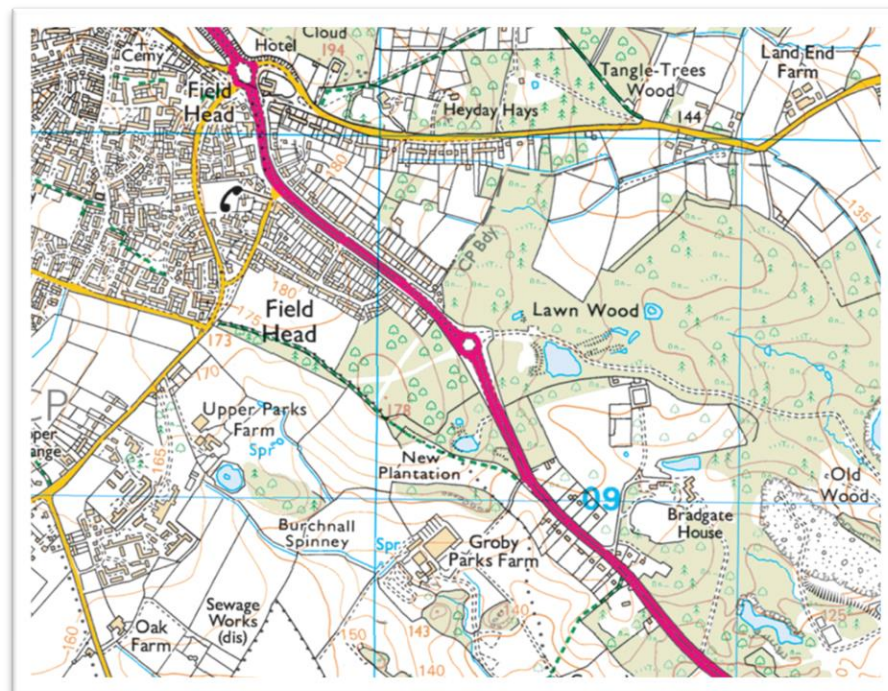


Figure 1.1: Study area

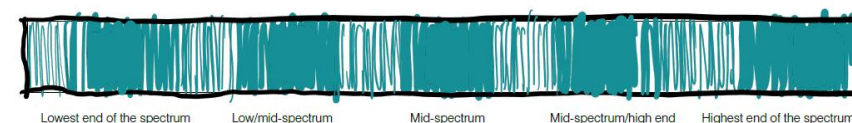
Methodology

- 1.15 The methodology adopted in the assessment process is based on guidance published by the Landscape Institute and developed from extensive professional experience. The criteria which inform the professional judgements in this assessments and the terminology used is set out in **Appendix LP1: Criteria, Spectrum Ranges and Glossary**.
- 1.16 The published guidance '*Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*', third edition (GLVIA 3) is not prescriptive, however the methodology adopted in this volume has been developed in line with the stages of the process as set out in the guidance; cognisant of changes in approach and technical guidance which has emerged over the past 10 years; and drawing on the 30+ years of experience of the author in the production of landscape and visual impact assessments prepared for planning applications and appeals.

² For the purposes of this report there is a distinction in terminology between impacts - the action being taken, and effects - the result of that action.

³ This methodology has been tested through the Inquiry process, has been subject to peer review by a number of landscape consultancies and planning

- 1.17 The Landscape Institute has prepared a variety of other technical notes to support the assessment of valued landscapes, townscape and landscape character and green infrastructure. Those of relevance in this volume are listed in the bibliography (**Appendix LP 2**).
- 1.18 The purpose of the LVIA is to describe the landscape and visual baseline situation (this Baseline Report), set out the construction and operational impacts of the project, including mitigation measures² and provide information regarding the likely consequences on the landscape and visual resources arising from the impacts identified. This report also considers further mitigation measures that are not integrated within the scheme of development.
- 1.19 The assessment is written on the basis that the primary audience will be the determining authority and the statutory and non-statutory consultees. It is therefore assumed that the publicly available and published documents referred to, such as the landscape character assessments, will be familiar and available to the reader. Footnotes are provided to assist.
- 1.20 Reflecting the guidance in GLVIA, throughout this assessment judgements, underpinned by the informed professional experience of the author, are made on where the value, susceptibility, sensitivity, magnitude lie on a spectrum ranging from low to high. To assist the reader the 'grading' relating to the spectrum will refer to:
- Lowest end of the spectrum
 - Low/mid-spectrum
 - Mid-spectrum
 - Mid-spectrum/high end
 - Highest end of the spectrum



authorities and further scrutinised independently by the Welsh Planning Inspectorate for a major infrastructure project. This methodology was explored in respect of an appeal for Development within the SDNP and its setting and was found by the inspector [APP/Z3825/W/22/3308455] to be "...a reliable

- 1.21 Given the multiple criteria which inform each judgement there is no single and fixed threshold between categories.
- 1.22 This 'category-free' approach to categorisation is adopted by LPL³ because typically the definitions and criteria used in determining thresholds may either be limited to using the threshold to define itself, e.g. a High sensitivity relates to a high value and high quality and medium sensitivity is medium value and medium quality etc. which in turn needs definition as to what is high and how this is differentiated from medium; or the criteria are described in absolute terms such as change being large scale, with effects over a wide geographic area and total loss of contributory components, when in fact there may be a large scale change but only experienced locally with a moderate change to components.
- 1.23 Consistent with GLVIA, paragraph 5.56 the 'ends' of each spectrum used in the assessment are set out in **Appendix LP1** which explains where the low and high points are, and the criteria applied in their determination. Professional judgement is then made as to the subtleties and variation in the combined factors.
- The key stages to the assessment process are:
 - Understanding the baseline situation.
 - Assigning sensitivity to the receptors (landscape and visual).
 - Consideration of the design and mitigation measures.
 - Evaluating the degree of change resulting from the Proposed Scheme.
 - Assessment of effects and identification of significant effects.

Consequence of development

- 1.24 It is important to acknowledge that GLVIA, paragraph 3.33, states:

"It is not essential to establish a series of thresholds for different levels of significance of landscape and visual effects, provided that it is made clear whether or not they are considered significant."

basis for assessing the landscape impacts of the scheme the subject of these appeals."



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

- 1.25 The simple point is to make clear judgements as to whether the effects are significant or not significant. Notably the word ‘harm’ is not contained in the GLVIA, any judgements on ‘harm’ are planning judgements and would be addressed in the appropriate forum.
- 1.26 This assessment therefore comments on the nature of the changes and whether the changes will be significant in the determination of the application.
- 1.27 The author of this LVIA visited the Site in September 2022, the weather was fair, becoming overcast with good visibility. Winter photography was undertaken in February 2023. Subsequently the project was placed on hold by the applicant. In January 2025 the project was restarted and therefore LPL undertook a review of the published character assessment and other relevant documents to establish if, and to what extent changes have occurred. In addition, and in the knowledge of new housing being developed to the southwest the ZTV mapping was re-run.
- This confirmed that the viewpoints which form the basis of the assessment were still representative;
 - The changes lay beyond the scope of the photography and updated photographs were not required. Those included in this LVIA represent the worst case scenario,
- 1.28 This LVIA considers the inter-related but distinct issues of the effects on the landscape, its character and resources and the views and visual amenity experienced by people.

Baseline analysis

- 1.29 The starting point of the process is to understand the ‘**Baseline Situation**’ in respect of the landscape and visual environment against which any changes are assessed. The contextual analysis considers the physical and perceptual aspect of the landscape, and the value attached to it, the views from where the changes are visible, and the people affected.
- 1.30 The description of the established context has been derived from:

- A review of published material, particularly in respect of Landscape Character Assessments (See Appendix 3: Bibliography);
- Consideration of the planning policy context (as related to the assessment process⁴);
- The adjacent allocations and planning consents;
- Zone of Theoretical Visibility mapping;
- Review of historic maps and images available online;
- Consideration of current mapping (plan and digital) and aerial photography; and
- Observations made in the field.

1.31 The viewpoints which form the basis of the visual analysis in this assessment have been determined by reference to the mapping shown on the Zone of Theoretical Visibility, and field verification undertaken by the author.

1.32 LP was initially appointed during the summer, photography was taken at the time of the appointment (**Appendix 5**) and subsequently retaken during the winter months (**Appendix 6**) to represent the worst case visual scenario.

Sensitivity of resources and receptor

1.33 Having determined the baseline situation against which the effect of the development is measured, the sensitivity of the landscape and visual resources to the change is considered and classified. This considers the value of the resource and the susceptibility to accommodate the proposed changes.

Consideration of the development

- 1.34 The assessment process then considers the **Development Inherent Mitigation Measures** (Section 4) so that the magnitude of the change can be described and assigned.
- 1.35 Throughout the assessment a subjective judgement, underpinned by an informed professional opinion and experience, is made on where the sensitivity of receptors or magnitude of changes lies on a spectrum from low to high.
- 1.36 The narrative which supports the conclusions drawn is provided to explain the rationale of the assessor.

Context to this assessment

Planning context

- 1.37 GLVIA does not require that an assessment of planning policies be a component of the LVIA process. The assessment of landscape and visual effects is prepared independent of the planning considerations which are made based on merit, compliance, and balance assessed by the determining authority. However, it is recognised that designations and policies may provide an indication of the ‘value’ of landscape and visual assets.
- 1.38 In this context, a review of the local landscape and townscape designations has not identified any ‘valued’ or protected landscapes within the Study Area (Adopted Core Strategy, Key Diagram).

Collaboration in the design process

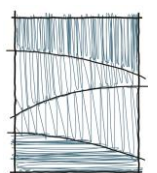
- 1.39 The author has engaged with the client team to achieve a successful design solution which responds to the local landscape and visual constraints, and other technical issues.
- 1.40 The assessor has provided input on the design evolution throughout the iterative process prior to submission of the application.

Deficiencies/omissions

- 1.41 Apart from the Application Site itself, no access to private land or property was obtained during the assessment.
- 1.42 The remainder of this Landscape and Visual Assessment is structured as follows:

Section 2: Baseline Situation
Section 3: Evaluation of Resources and Receptors
Section 4: Design Evolution and Mitigation Measures
Section 5: Magnitude of Change
Section 6: Consideration of effects of development
Section 7: Summary

⁴ IEMA - Impact Assessment Outlook Journal, Volume 11: October 2021 The relationship between planning policy and LVIA (Paul Macrae and Edward White)



Section 2: Baseline situation

- 2.1 The *European Landscape Convention - A Framework for Implementation*, October 2007⁵, contains the short definition of ‘landscape’ and provides supporting text at paragraph 1.2. The ELC definition is short, yet comprehensive, namely:

“landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors’ The definition applies to the whole territory of states including all urban and peri-urban landscapes, towns, villages and rural areas, the coast, and inland areas. It applies to ordinary or even degraded landscape as well as those area that are outstanding or protected.”

- 2.2 This interpretation is embedded in the GLVIA 3 (paragraph 2.3).
- 2.3 Landscape character assessments are typically limited to the ‘landscape’ beyond the settlement boundaries. By their nature they describe and reference undeveloped landscapes and tend to understate the inter-relationship of townscape and landscape on settlement edges. In respect of this project the council has helpfully published townscape assessments.
- 2.4 This is noted in the Landscape Institute’s Technical Information Note (TIN) 05/2017, revised April 2018 (paragraph 2.4 and 2.5):

“A townscape character assessment may present a description of the townscape that is distinctive to that place, supported by materials such as maps, illustrations, and photographs. It can provide an understanding of how a place has evolved and developed over time to respond to natural, social, and economic drivers, and how this is reflected in the layout of streets, the architecture of buildings and the materials used. Historic Area Assessments may also be

used to inform the historic environment aspects of the townscape character assessment.

This understanding of the intrinsic character and qualities of the place can then be used to guide the location, design, scale, massing, and type of development that can be accommodated, such as public realm improvements, new buildings, or an urban park. A townscape character assessment can also form the basis for assessing the effects of change, to help decision-takers decide whether a new development is appropriate in its context, for example.”

- 2.5 This LVIA recognises that landscape and visual effects need to be considered separately, however the character of the landscape has aesthetic aspects which are experienced visually, this is acknowledged, as appropriate.

Landscape character

- 2.6 Landscape Characterisation is the process whereby areas are identified and classified into distinct, recognisable, and consistent patterns of elements and features. This is a value-free process and does not provide for comparison of areas being ‘better’ than others. The determination of ‘value’ primarily comes through the process of determining and applying designations, policies, or local expressions of value.
- 2.7 Published characterisations cascade from the National Character Areas (NCA), prepared by Natural England, though to regional and local Landscape Character Areas (LCA) and Landscape Character Types (LCT) prepared by County and District Councils. Typically, the smaller scale, local assessment is most relevant to small-scale projects.
- 2.8 The relevant extracts (regional to local level) are contained within **Appendix 4 (Appendices 4a-4d)**. To avoid duplication, the text which follows summarises those matters described in the appendices pertinent to the application site.
- 2.9 Landscape Character Assessments typically classify and describe the countryside beyond settlement boundaries (**Appendices 4a-4c**), sometimes referencing the presence of

settlements. As a result, the descriptions do not consider or focus on the character of the peri-urban areas or specific townscapes. However, the approach adopted in Leicestershire includes townscape analysis which is welcomed and assists the understanding of the current sense of place.

National scale

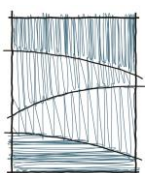
- 2.10 For the purpose of assessing the effects of development National Character Areas (NCA) are relevant; however, they are very broad and set out the key characteristics of large geographic areas. Whilst NCAs do not provide an appreciation of the site-specific issues which need to be taken into account in the determination process, it should be noted that some of the characteristics are discernible in relation to the wider landscape surrounding the site.
- 2.11 The site lies within the **NCA 73 Charnwood** published by Natural England.

Regional scale

East Midlands Regional Character Assessment, 2010

- 2.12 The site is located within the area classified as **10D: Forested Ancient Hills**. The apparent characteristics are underpinned by the igneous geology which appear as rocky outcrops and knolls rising out of the low-lying farmland.
- 2.13 The character is distinctly well-wooded, albeit the lowland farmlands include pastures with mature hedgerow providing containment.
- 2.14 Continued need for large scale development to meet housing requirements is recognised as a force for change. Advice to limit landscape and visual impacts includes locating new development on previously developed land, or close to existing settlements, and to include tree and woodland planting to integrate development into the landscape.

⁵ Although the UK has left the EU the definitions are still valid and relevant to the LVIA process.



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Charnwood Forest Landscape Character Assessment, June 2019⁶

- 2.15 This document considers the landscape of the Charnwood Forest, as part of the National Forest project. Of relevance this document provides:
- (i) an overarching description of the character of Charnwood Forest. Describing the main physical features of the area as well as human influences which have influenced the character of the area over time; and
 - (ii) a review of the 19 settlements located within Charnwood Forest which were included within the original 2009 study. Local scale
- 2.16 The Site lies at the most westerly edge of the landscape character area classified as **Area 5: Groby Estate Woodland**. This is a discreet parcel of land, predominantly comprising a mature estate landscape with grassland, ancient woodland and former quarrying and large waterbodies.
- 2.17 The site lies beyond the woodland, and it is the only field which abuts Markfield's settlement edge. Field observations indicate that there is a degree of inconsistency between the description of the character area and the character of the application site.
- 2.18 In terms of the settlement character, it is recognised that Markfield is a clustered settlement. Its outer form typically is defined by the linear features comprising hedgerows and roads, this is subject to change with the implementation of planning consent 20/01283/FUL.
- 2.19 Recommendations for accommodating change include enhancing urban edges through additional planting and consideration of new development design. Development should be in keeping with the existing settlement vernacular.

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Landscape Character Assessment 2017

- 2.20 The Borough Council's assessment similarly addresses the landscape and settlement character.

- 2.21 This document preceded the analysis prepared in 2019 for the Charnwood Forest. The extent of character areas, nomenclature and descriptions are not the same, but this document generally identifies the same key features and attributes of the other publications. Within this assessment the landscape character area is classified as being **LCA A: Charnwood Forest**.

Landscape Sensitivity Study 2017

- 2.22 The assessment of sensitivity does not extend to the Site as the analysis was applied to those areas subject to pressures arising from settlement growth. At the time of its preparation, the land to the east of Markfield evidently was not considered to be subject to the same pressures.
- 2.23 The settlement character description provides more detail than the 2019 document, albeit the general sensitivities and recommendations are reflected in the 2019 advice. Specifically pertinent to the site is the townscape strategy to ensure future development respects the setting of the village and its rural interface and enhances the urban edge, primarily through the provision of additional planting.

Site specific landscape components

- 2.24 The Study Area shown in Figure 1.1 was revisited after the fieldwork and confirmed as being appropriate for the scale and nature of the development in terms of the character of the area.
- 2.25 The application site and its context share some characteristics with the wider landscape. The following site specific observations are based on reading the published material and field work:

Landform

- 2.26 At a local scale there is no evidence of the dramatic landform features which are notable within the wider landscape and arise from the underlying igneous rock. Whilst the bedrock of the Site comprises igneous bedrock (outcrops shown in cerise - Figure 2.1) it is overlain by superficial sedimentary deposits (green).



Figure 2.1: Geology⁷

- 2.27 The landform is gently undulating with a local ridgeline along the northern boundary of the site, occupied by the existing properties on Jacqueline Road (see **Figure 2.2**).
- 2.28 From the highest point in the north western corner of the Site the land falls to the south and south east.

Hydrology

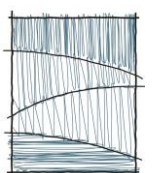
- 2.29 There are no water features within or bounding the Site.

Land cover

- 2.30 The Site is a single rectangular agricultural field. It is used for growing crops rather than a pasture for grazing. As a result, it has a uniform and uninteresting appearance.
- 2.31 The wooded features to the south and east comprise predominantly deciduous species and have a sense of rurality to their sense of place, which contrasts with the distinctly sub-urban environment to the north and west which is dominated by residential development and road infrastructure.

⁶ This document was prepared with reference to the regional and Hinckley and Bosworth characterisations. This is the most up to date assessment of the landscape associated with the site.

⁷ <https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/>



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Associations

2.32 Due to the existing development, presence of woodland and severance within the landscape caused by the A50, the Site has no physical, cultural, or visual associations with the Markfield Conservation Area or Bradgate Park Registered Park and Garden. It is perceived alongside the exiting settlement edge.

Enclosure

2.33 The wider landscape context is typically open in character. Unlike areas to the south of the Site and Markfield village the site is a highly enclosed area of land. With open, unvegetated boundaries to the north and west the Site is most strongly associated with and perceived as being influenced by the immediate townscape areas. Woodland to the south and east enclose the site and imbue a sense of separation and detachment from the wider countryside to the south.

Access

2.34 There is a public right of way (PRoW) to the south of the Site. There is no permitted access within the Site. The PRoW is contained within a strong tree belt so visual access is restricted.

Relative tranquility

2.35 Despite the extent of countryside to the south of the Site there are a number of activities and land uses which detract from the over sense of rurality and level of tranquillity experienced with the Site and associated with its immediate context. These uses include the operational quarrying (i.e. Bardon Hill and Stanton under Bardon), highways network (M1 and A50 corridor), local roads and construction works associated with the consented development to the southwest.

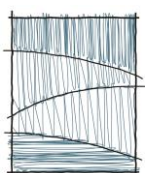
Townscape character

2.36 The residential development in proximity to the Site is distant from and lacks any observable connection with the historic core and Conservation Area of Markfield. Whilst the wider settlement has a diversity of architectural styles and age ranges to the housing stock, there is a uniformity and modernity to the townscape associated with the Site.

2.37 Properties are predominantly two-storey, with some clusters of bungalows. They are arranged in a regular, linear pattern

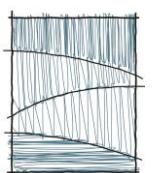
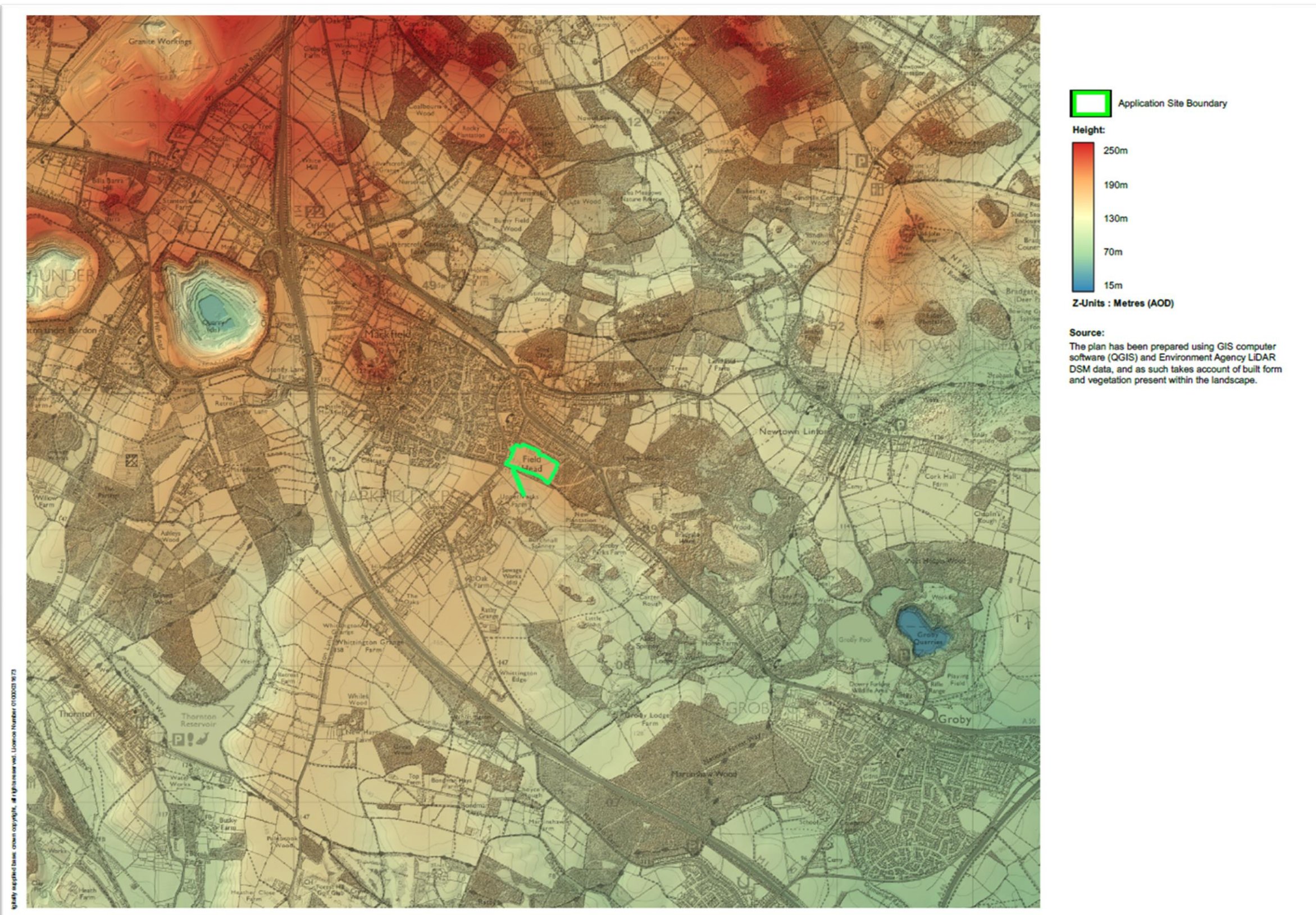
fronting the internal and distribution roads. Front gardens tend to be small with minimal landscape features. Tree cover is minimal and primarily restricted to rear gardens.

2.38 Overall, the Site is situated in a peri-urban location and has a character and appearance consistent with the peri-urban qualities of this settlement edge location. The existing townscape is evident and has a strong influence over the Site.



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Figure 2.2: Topography



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Visual character and views

Extent of visual envelope

- 2.39 The analysis of views relates to more than what is visible and the appreciation of the apparent character of the landscape. Annotations and descriptive text is provided for each photoviewpoint.
- 2.40 The photography included in this report complies with the LIs technical guidance⁸. It was taken during the winter months, on a clear day using a Canon EOS, 6D digital camera with a fixed 50mm f/1.5 prime lens. The photography is included at A3 to fit the format of the report as an *aide memoir*. These images do not negate the need to visit the site and viewpoints.
- 2.41 The area within which people are likely to experience a visual change resulting from development has been mapped to create a Zone of Theoretical Visibility⁹ (ZTV, Figure 2.4). The mapped ZTV utilises data which includes buildings and vegetation and therefore the visibility shown has a high degree of accuracy as to the geographic extent of visibility of new housing within the Site.
- 2.42 Fieldwork has enabled the assessor to; confirm that the ZTV is a fair representation of the extent of the Visual Envelope and identify the representative viewpoints¹⁰ (Figure 2.5) which form the basis of the assessment contained within this LVIA. The Study Area shown in Figure 1.1 was revisited after the fieldwork and confirmed as being appropriate for the scale and nature of the development in respect of visibility and views.
- 2.43 The key elements in the landscape which limit the extent of the Visual Envelope principally comprise the enclosing built form and boundary vegetation. The southern boundary is a substantial woodland belt which forms a visually impenetrable barrier when in leaf. The depth of this feature and the inclusion of understory planting indicates that the sense of visual enclosure continues to be experienced in the winter months.
- 2.44 There are some glimpsed views from the residential streets through gaps between buildings if one views directly through

the gaps. When travelling along the road the views are oblique, the site is not visible to the same degree when moving along the road. The existing properties dominate the foreground and provide an urban context to the views, changes experienced from these roads (Jacqueline Road and Charnwood Drive) are scoped out of the assessment process.

- 2.45 Similarly, from elevated viewpoints; the site, or the features on boundaries, form components in the overall visual composition (e.g. Hill Hole Nature Reserve and Bradgate Country Park). Any change will be a small change in the view, consistent with the content, without affecting balance of elements or creating a prominent feature. These views are also scoped out of the assessment.
- 2.46 No access was made into private properties, views across the site have informed the assessment of private views.



Figure 2.3: Private views across the site.

Representative viewpoints

- 2.47 The relevant local vantage points and the people likely to experience visual change resulting from the proposals (shown on Figure 2.4) can be summarised as:
- Users of road network, specifically Ratby Lane, Launde Road (**Photoviewpoints 7-10**)
 - Those walking along PRow R21 (**Photoviewpoints 1-3**); and
 - Occupants of properties which abut and back onto the application site along Jacqueline Road (no photographs taken from private properties, interpolated from views across the site and **photoviewpoints 4 and 6**).

Visual composition

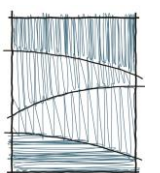
- 2.48 The visual composition is illustrated by the photography and supporting narrative contained in **Appendix 4**.
- 2.49 The following viewpoints have been scoped out of this assessment:
- Photoviewpoint 5 - Leicester Road**
- Photosviewpoints 11 and 12 - Hill Hole Nature Reserve**
- Photoviewpoint 13 - Bradgate Country Park**

⁸ Landscape Institute, Technical Guidance Note 06/19

⁹ The ZTV mapping has been prepared with Mapinfo and Vertical Mapper utilising 2m resolution terrain data derived from aerial photography. These

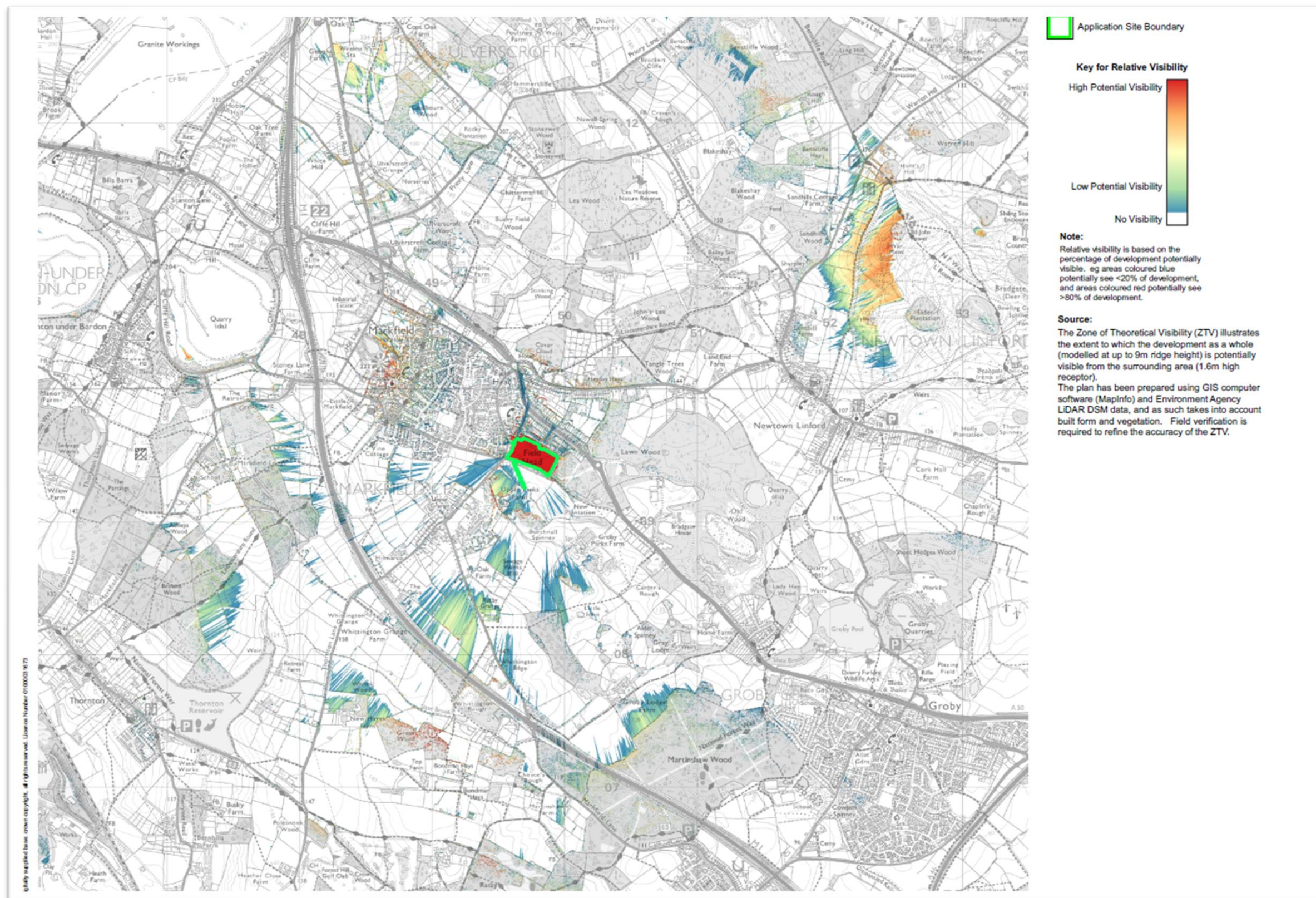
datasets contain information on buildings and trees. The 'tree' data sets do not include the full tree canopy; therefore, the mapping is a worse-case scenario, the trees actually provide greater screening than the mapping indicates.

¹⁰ The photographs have been taken with a Canon 5DS R DSLR Camera and 50mm f/1.4 prime lens.



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Figure 2.4: Zone of Theoretical Visibility (UPDATE VERSION NEEDED)



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Figure 1.5: Photographic viewpoints



Section 3: Evaluation of the Sensitivity of Resources and Receptors

- 3.1 The sensitivity of the landscape (resource) and people experiencing the views (receptors) is established by considering both the value of the resource/view and the susceptibility of each to accommodate the proposed without undue¹¹ negative consequences.

Landscape value

- 3.2 A component of 'sensitivity' is "the relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society" (GLVIA, 3 Box 5.1, Glossary and further explored in Assessing landscape value outside national designations, LI Technical Guidance Note 02/21).
- 3.3 In the High Court judgment¹² handed down on the 15th November 2023, the judge made clear the distinction in respect of NPPF paragraph 187 and the sub paragraphs (a) and (b). Valued Landscapes are to be 'protected' and 'enhanced' whereas other countryside is to be 'recognised' for its intrinsic character and beauty. 'Recognising' has some level of protection, however the level of protection afforded to valued landscapes is plainly higher.
- 3.4 All landscapes have some value to one or more communities for one or more of its assets, having value and being valued are different concepts. Local value is at the lower end of the spectrum, with National Parks and AONBs being at the highest end of the spectrum.
- 3.5 Landscape Value is rated, for the purposes of this assessment on the following scale:
- National/International - Designated landscapes which are nationally or internationally designated for their landscape value - including National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, World Heritage Sites; Heritage Coast and National Scenic Areas.

- District- Locally or regionally designated landscapes (e.g., Area of High Landscape Value, Regional Scenic Areas); also, areas which local evidence (such as tourism guides, landscape character assessments or other documentary information) indicates as being more valued than the surrounding area.
- Local - 'everyday' landscape which is appreciated by the local community but has little or no wider recognition of its value.

- 3.6 As noted above, the landscape characterisation process does not assign 'value' to the landscape. Information which may contribute to the understanding of value may include:

- Areas recognised by statute
- Local Plans (extent of policies for local landscape designations)
- Information regarding individual elements such as Conservation Areas, TPOs etc.
- Art and literature
- Material on landscape or local of community interests, such as local green spaces, village greens or allotments.

National value

- 3.7 In this instance the application site is not directly affected by designations or policies such as:

- SSSI;
- Habitat Sites;
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- National Park;
- Heritage Coast;
- Irreplaceable habitats;
- Areas at risk of flooding or coastal change; and
- Designated heritage assets¹³.

- 3.8 Furthermore, the site does not lie within the setting of any of these designations.

- 3.9 In respect of the townscape, the historic core is designated as a Conservation Area. There is no physical or visual inter-

relationship between the site and the CA. This designation does not confer value onto the Site.

District value

- 3.10 The local plan does not include policies pertinent to landscape value beyond those identified at a national level.
- 3.11 Whilst Policy DM4 of the adopted SADMP seeks to protect the **intrinsic value**, beauty and open character and landscape character through safeguarding the countryside from unsustainable development. This does not mean the landscape is a 'Valued Landscape,' having value and being valued are different propositions.
- 3.12 It has been suggested by another authority (Charnwood Borough) that the inclusion of land within the Charnwood Forest is an indicator which elevates the land to a NPPF, paragraph 187 a) 'Valued Landscape'.
- 3.13 In the opinion of the author of this report, upheld by the conclusions of Inspector Morgan, Charnwood Forest is not a non-statutory designation¹⁴.
- 3.14 The National Forest is an environmental regeneration project covering 200 square miles of Leicestershire, Staffordshire, and Derbyshire'. It is managed by a not-for profit company. Charnwood Forest is 'recognised as a Regional Park, providing a focus for leisure and conservation activity.'
- 3.15 By contrast the Local Plan is clear when other matters are designations, such as green wedge and conservation areas.

Local value

- 3.16 In the absence of a designation that indicates value, there may be instances where local landscapes or Sites are 'Valued Landscapes'.
- 3.17 Having considered the committee reports for the refusal for development within the Site, [15/00889/OUT] and the consented development off London Road, Markfield

¹¹ Undue being defined as - unwarranted or inappropriate because excessive or disproportionate.

¹² R (Bramley Solar Farm Residents Group) v Secretary of State LUHC [2023] EWHC 2842

¹³ NPPF, paragraph 11, footnote 7

¹⁴ Appeal Ref: APP/X2410/W/21/3281964
Land to the west of Iveshead Road, Shepshed, Leicestershire, LE12 9ER



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

[20/01283/FUL]¹⁵ it is noted that the Council has never determined that the landscape to the south of Markfield or the specific sites are NPPF 'Valued Landscapes'.

- 3.18 The LIs Technical Guidance Note 01/21¹⁶ sets out a number of factors of relevance in determining the value of the landscape. In summary the following is recorded:

Natural heritage

- 3.19 Currently the ecological value of the Site is limited (see Ecological Assessment). There are only limited valued natural capital assets primarily limited to the field boundaries.

- 3.20 The limited quantum and quality of natural assets means that the Site does not function as an important part of the Green Infrastructure network.

Cultural heritage

- 3.21 There are no identified heritage assets within or associated with the Site that would elevate the contribution the Site makes to the cultural heritage aspect of the landscape.

Landscape condition

- 3.22 The physical attributes of the agricultural landscape have undergone significant erosion through the growth of the settlement so that the Site is precepted and experienced as a single field on the edge of Markfield.
- 3.23 The condition of the landscape has been diminished by the changes and does not demonstrate an intact condition to the landscape.

Associations

- 3.24 There are no known associations/publications or links to notable people, places, or events.

Distinctiveness

- 3.25 The landscape has a peri-urban character, there is nothing which makes it distinctive beyond being typical of the character of the Unwooded Severn Vale.

Recreational

- 3.26 There is no access within the site and recreational assets are limited to the public rights of way and pedestrian footpaths

associated with the road and settlement infrastructure, the recreational function of the landscape is limited.

Perceptual qualities

- 3.27 The presence of the road network and traffic travelling upon it introduces disturbance, noise and activity to the landscape. It is not wild and does not possess any sense of tranquility.

Interim conclusion on landscape value

- 3.28 The landscape value of the site and its immediate countryside and settled context is at the lower end of the spectrum, having some local value to the nearby community simply by being open areas of undeveloped agricultural land. No value has been expressed by the community to elevate the value of the landscape.

Landscape susceptibility

- 3.29 Susceptibility indicates the ability of a defined landscape or visual receptor to accommodate the proposed development:

“without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.” (GLVIA 3, paragraph 5.40).

- 3.30 At the highest end of the 'susceptibility spectrum' is a landscape wherein changes in terms of the proposed development would be entirely at odds with the character of the local area, related to matters including pattern, grain, use, scale, and mass. The development would require extensive change to the topography, vegetative cover, or form of buildings.
- 3.31 Mid-way on the spectrum is a landscape wherein the proposed development has a degree of consistency with the existing scale, pattern, grain, land use of the prevailing character, although mitigation may be appropriate to enhance assimilation.
- 3.32 At the lower end of the spectrum the proposed development is entirely consistent with the character of the local area, related to matters including pattern, grain, use, scale, and mass.

- 3.33 Given the fact that housing is located on two sides of the site, and consent has been granted for new development, alongside infrastructure and open space, to the south of London Road (300m from the Site), it is clear the provision of new homes is entirely consistent with the land use, pattern and grain of the settlement and the landscape components which prevail in the local area, beyond the built up area boundary.

- 3.34 The proposed land use, scale of development and nature of the associated infrastructure, including Green Infrastructure (GI) reflects the existing immediate and wider landscape and townscape context.

Interim conclusion on landscape susceptibility

- 3.35 The susceptibility of the landscape to the type of change proposed is at the lowest end of the spectrum.

Landscape sensitivity of the site and its context

- 3.36 The Site was not included in the Charnwood Borough Landscape Sensitivity Assessment of SHLAA Sites prepared by LUC (March 2019).
- 3.37 At the lower end of the spectrum (low sensitivity) resources may be; low valued/undesigned landscapes, with no distinctive or sensitive features, with the potential to accommodate appropriately design development, and where adverse effects can be mitigated for. At the higher end of the range are; those highly valued/designated landscapes recognised in policy, may contain landscape features that cannot accommodate development of the type proposed, and where mitigation measures are unable to avoid, compensate or offset the undue consequences which would arise.
- 3.38 The analysis of the sensitivity of the landscape character and its components is set out in **Table 3.1**.
- 3.39 In the case of the site at Ratby Lane the overall sensitivity to the change proposed is at the lower end of the spectrum. The nature of the development proposed is consistent with its immediate context in terms of the housing elements,

¹⁵ The character and value of the landscape is unaffected by the decision to allocate land for development. It retains its intrinsic character and value.

¹⁶ Assessing landscape value outside national designations, LI, February 2021

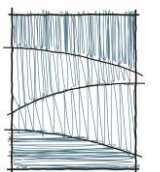


Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

with a pattern and grain that complements the existing settlement edge in the vicinity of the site.

- 3.40 Mitigation measures include elements which reflect the existing landscape framework and increase the tree cover and accessible natural green spaces.

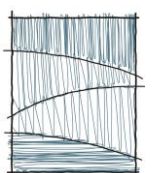
.



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

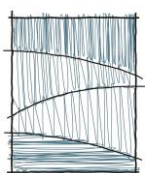
Table 3.1: Landscape Sensitivity Evaluation

Landscape Receptor-	Value	Susceptibility -	Sensitivity
National and regional landscape character areas	These classifications do not denote or establish the value of the landscape. There are no national, regional, or local protected landscapes.	The landscape contained a variety of land use, at the broad scale of these assessments there is evidence that the inclusion of housing in the landscape is a component of the landscape and therefore at this scale the susceptibility to housing is at the lowest end of the spectrum.	The sensitivity of the broader landscape context of the scale of development proposed is negligible.
The site as a parcel of land on the edge the settlement, peri-urban in character.	As recorded above, the value is at the lowest end of the spectrum.	Housing is a component of this landscape/townscape and therefore the susceptibility to change is at the lower end of the spectrum.	Based on the above conclusions, taking account of the value of the landscape and the nature of the proposed development, consistent with its immediate environs is within the lower range of the spectrum of sensitivity (A).
Attributes of the Site			
Landform	No value	The settlement is overlain across the underlying landform, the areas of high ground in the local area are most susceptible to change. The site is at a relatively lower topographic level than the settlement to the west. The susceptibility to change is towards the lower end of the spectrum.	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum, with the northern edge being slightly more sensitive to development, albeit still at the lower end of the range of sensitivity (A).
Hydrology	No discernible hydrology associated with the site.		
Land cover	The agricultural land use results in a transitory cover within the site which has little ecological or landscape value. The external tree belts and woodlands are of a locally high value, contributing to the amenity of the landscape, the sense of place and other GI functions.	As noted above, development has occurred and more recently been permitted on open agricultural land. The susceptibility is at the lower end of the range.	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum (A)
Associations/Townscape	The site is closely associated with the housing immediately to the north and west. This is not a valued townscape, albeit the residents will value their properties and neighborhood. This value is at the lower end of the spectrum.	The nature of the change proposed is consistent with the context. Housing is a component of this landscape/townscape and therefore the susceptibility to change is at the lower end of the spectrum.	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum (A)
Enclosure	The degree of enclosure is of local value, it ensures that the settlement edge is well defined and contained.	Loss of this aspect of the landscape would result in a fundamental alteration of the settlement edge, this is	The sensitivity of the enclosed character and features which determine the level of enclosure are at the mid-range of sensitivity (C).



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Landscape Receptor-	Value	Susceptibility -	Sensitivity
		at the mid to high end of the spectrum of susceptibility.	
Access	The footpath network (rights of way and roadside pavements) are important assets and of high local value to the community.	These assets are susceptible to change and considered to be at the mid-range of the spectrum	This attribute is considered to be at the mid-range of sensitivity to change (C).
Relative tranquility	In this disturbed landscape the relative tranquility of the site will be locally valued, but at the mid to low end of the spectrum in the context of the range of relative tranquility of the area.	Given the settled character and proximity to the road network the susceptibility to change is towards the lower end of the spectrum.	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum (A).



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Value attached to the views

3.41 The value of views should take account of:

- Recognition of value attached to a particular view, associated to a heritage asset, or planning designation; and/or
- Indicators of the value through guidebooks, tourist maps, or historic references.

3.42 There are no designed views, or vantage points protected by policy associated with the application site.

3.43 As noted above, those viewpoints, typically associated with more elevated locations and areas of recreational value, do not form part of this assessment.

3.44 The OS mapping indicates a panoramic viewpoint to the northwest of the site. This provides an indication of a valued vantage point which extends beyond the local community. However, as demonstrated by the visual analysis, development within the site will not be visible from this location.

3.45 For those residents who overlook the Site the views will be of personal value, any such value must be considered in the context of the hierarchy of views and value placed on them.

3.46 The viewpoints which form the basis of this assessment are of value to the local community. Their value lies at the lower end of the spectrum.

Interim conclusion on the value of views

3.47 Those people who experience immediate change to their visual environment are those who occupy the adjoining

properties, to these individuals the views are likely to be of high value on a personal level.

3.48 There are no vantage points of recognised or acknowledged value affected by the proposals.

Susceptibility to visual change

3.49 For the purposes of this assessment, the susceptibility of people to changes in their views and visual experience is a function of the occupation of the people, the extent to which their attention or interest is focused on the views and the visual amenity they experience at a particular location.

3.50 It is noted that none of the vantage points identified by this assessment are either acknowledged or protected in policy as an important or key view, nor are any views recorded in published material on maps as being of local value or associated with an important landmark.

3.51 Those people engaged in open air recreation, typically associated with open spaces and public rights of way, are most likely to focus on their context, perceptually and visually. They will be most susceptible to change.

3.52 In addition, people who live in the adjacent properties experiencing the view daily, even as a backdrop to their activities will be susceptible to visual change.

Interim conclusion on the susceptibility of people to visual change

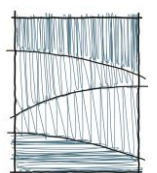
3.53 Of the potential locations and people likely to be affected by the proposals, the adjacent residents will be most susceptible to visual change.

Visual sensitivity

3.54 At the lower end of spectrum may be those people engaged in an activity which is not focused on the landscape or context of the person/people, where the views are infrequent, the representative or specific viewpoints are not associated with a valued landscape or asset. At the higher end of the spectrum people are engaged in an activity whereby the focus of the visual experience is linked to the landscape context, the views are associated with a valued landscape or important assets/landmarks, and the number or people and frequency of the visual experience is high.

3.55 In the case of the site and relevant visual receptors the sensitivity assigned, for the purposes of this assessment, is set out in **Table 3.2**. This includes the rationale to the classification of the value and susceptibility of each visual receptor, and ultimately the sensitivity by way of reference to the spectrum (A-E).

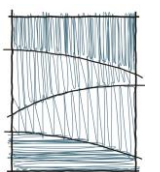
3.56 People on the immediate boundary of the site will be most sensitive to the visual change wither when walking along the footpath or looking out from the existing properties. The geographic extent relating to the most sensitive visual receptors is highly localised and contained to the immediate environs of the site.



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Table 0.2: Visual Sensitivity Evaluation

Visual Receptor - This refers to the people not the location - the viewpoints which represent the groups of people are noted	Value	Susceptibility - In respect of people being susceptible to the introduction of housing within the application site there is a low-medium susceptibility to the change. The current visual experience includes being able to see housing. The landform of the surrounding area dictates how the much housing is visible and the way it is revealed in the view.	Sensitivity
People using the local public rights of way network and pedestrian footpaths alongside roads. Representative viewpoints 1 to 3 and 7 to 10.	There is some local value to these routes as they connect people to the wider countryside and provide for daily walks to local facilities and part of circular routes used for recreation such as dog-walking. The value is in the mid-range of the value spectrum.	Typically, people will be using the routes as part of a recreational experience or daily moving around the local area. People are likely to be engaged with their visual environment. The susceptibility of these people lies between the high and mid-range of the spectrum.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is within the mid-high range of the spectrum (D).
Users of road network, specifically Ratby Lane and Launde Road Representative viewpoints 7 to 10.	There is no value associated with views from the road network. The road network is used for commuting and general movement through the area and not part of a 'scenic' network for pleasure travel.	Whilst views may be experienced daily, the visual context is the background to travel activities which are the prime focus of those people. These people have the lowest level of visual susceptibility to change.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is at the lowest end of the spectrum (A).
Occupants of properties which abut the application site. No photography from private properties. See Figure 2.3 and photoviewpoints 4 and 6.	Properties benefit from an 'inward' facing position on the edge of the settlement, rear gardens back onto the Site but fencing impede ground level views. Occupants of two-storey properties will enjoy some longer ranging views but to a lesser degree from rooms used during the daytime. For this group of people, the value of the view will be at the mid-range to the higher end of the spectrum. This level of value diminishes beyond the immediate neighbours, albeit those properties to the north of Jacqueline Road may have some views across the site from first floor windows.	Residents experience their environment daily; they will be susceptible to change viewed from those rooms occupied in daylight hours. These people will be at the higher end of the range of susceptibility to visual change.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is within the mid to high range of the spectrum (D).



Section 4: Design evolution and mitigation measures

Design evolution and recommendations

- 4.1 The application proposes the delivery of
- Up to 130 new homes
 - 1.38 ha of publicly accessible open space
- 4.2 Mitigation measures are those measures, both incorporated into, or dismissed during the design process to:
- Prevent/avoid adverse effects,
 - Reduce effects; and, where possible,
 - Offset or remedy (or compensate for) any significant adverse landscape and visual effects.
- 4.3 Enhancement measures are subtly different, as they seek to improve the landscape resource and the visual amenity of the proposed development site and its wider setting, over and above its baseline condition.
- 4.4 The approach of the applicants and their advisors has been to ‘design-in’ the mitigation strategy both in terms of designed and created solutions and long-term management to minimise the overall effects.
- 4.5 The baseline analysis (landscape and townscape) is a critical component of the design process and achieving a successful outcome in respect of the masterplan.
- 4.6 The existing character is important. By understanding the existing sense of place and relationship of buildings to the spaces they are adjacent to and within, the approach to delivering a landscape-led scheme emerges and ensures that the new development complements its context and is anchored to its location.
- 4.7 This is an issue considered in GLVIA 3, Chapter 4: The Proposed Development, Design and Mitigation. Paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 state:

“Design plays an increasingly important part in the development planning process. This has been emphasised by the introduction of statutory requirements for the production of design statements,

or design and access statements, for many planning proposals in different parts of the UK. Such Statements explain the design principles and concepts underpinning the proposal and process through which it has evolved. This includes the ways in which the context of the development, including the landscape, has been appraised, or assessed and how the design of the development takes that context into account in relation to its proposed use.”

“EIA itself can be an important design tool. It is now usually an iterative process the stages feed into the planning and design of the project. The iterative design and assessment process has great strength because it links the analysis of the environmental issues with steps to improve the siting, layout, and design of a particular scheme.”

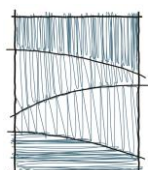
- 4.8 This contextually informed iterative process is essential in understanding the baseline situation, interplay of components, sense of place and delivering an appropriate and complementary settlement expansion scheme.
- 4.9 As noted above, Leyton Place has worked with the masterplanners to understand the townscape and landscape character and qualities to inform the development of the masterplan. The applicant’s team has worked in a fully collaborative manner to achieve an appropriate design outcome.

Design approach and integration - landscape and visual character

- 4.10 Based on the published analysis, GI principles and policies and site observations the following were recommended to be considered in the development of the masterplan:
- 4.11 By way of reference to Figure 4.1 the following approach is recommended to enable assimilation of the development into the settlement edge, responding to the landscape, townscape, and visual context.

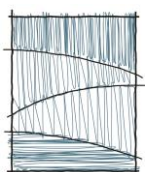
- [1] To integrate with the settlement edge, consistent with the townscape elements provide housing backing onto the rear gardens of the existing properties. Cluster bungalows in locations where they are already present in the townscape to demonstrate how the new housing will minimise impacts on the high ground and overlooking with the adjacent properties;

- [2] Provide a green space to the entrance to provide a looser grain settlement at this edge of settlement location;
- [3] Expand the open space, retaining the trees and creating breaches in the hedgerow so that the open space is consolidated, and its functionality can be increased. Provision of informal and linked pedestrian links (including play provision) and fruiting species will provide Green Infrastructure benefits. The approach to this space should be to form the transition zone where the existing and new settlement come together as a means of physical, visual, and perceptual integration, akin to a village green/gateway;
- [4] Feathered edge to development. Properties to face outwards to positively address the open space and the transition to the wider countryside, avoiding a hard and fenced edge in this location;
- [5] Green spaces areas to include SUDs, ecological habitats, and tree planting to filter and soften the appearance of the settlement edge;
- [6] Provide links to the existing footpath to enhance connectivity for the existing and new community, providing more options for circular walks;
- [7] LEAP including appropriate buffers to be located centrally to the community and set back from the footpaths so that the existing levels of tranquillity are not substantially eroded;
- [8] Provision of new tree planting to ensure longevity of the tree belt and reinforce the separation between the settlement and the wider countryside.



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Figure 4.1: Landscape and visual recommendations



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Green Infrastructure

Hinckley and Bosworth Green infrastructure Strategy (July 2020)

- 4.12 Within Figure 5.1 of this document, the Green Infrastructure assets (GI) associated with the application site are the tree belt on the southern boundary and the woodland to the east.

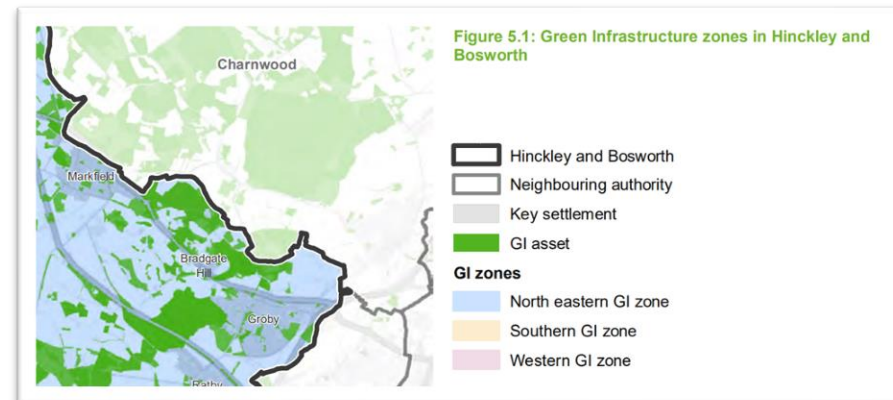


Figure 4.2: Extract of Figure 5.1 GI strategy

- 4.13 There are seven guiding principles for provision of GI in the borough:

1. Delivery of multifunctional benefits and essential services
2. Planning, design, connectivity
3. Creating value.
4. Funding, stewardship, and governance
5. Climate change resilience and mitigation
6. Supporting the recovery of biodiversity network
7. Partnership working and stakeholder engagement.

Hinckley and Bosworth Adopted Core Strategy 2009

- 4.14 The core strategy, policies 19 and 20 seek to deliver specific elements/quantum of GI. In respect of Markfield the objectives relate to promotion of the settlement for tourism and increase tree planting alongside the A50 and promoting traffic free access between Markfield and Groby. All of these fall outside of the scope of this planning application.

- 4.15 These specific matters are set within the context of the overarching objective recorded in paragraphs 4.60 to 4.62, namely:

Green infrastructure is a network of multi-functional green spaces. This network of both public and privately owned land and water supports native species, maintains natural and ecological processes, protects,

and enhances the historic environment and landscape character, sustains air and water resources, and contributes to the health and quality of life of people and communities.

The growth proposed in Hinckley & Bosworth provides an opportunity to plan for a green infrastructure network, serving the needs of both rural and urban communities and strengthening the links between them. It must link in with the wider green infrastructure framework for the Leicestershire region and will provide important green corridors to enable wildlife migration and protection and enhancement of biodiversity.

An important component of green infrastructure is the green spaces and play areas that are integral to both urban and rural communities. The provision of high quality green spaces and play areas in the right areas can have significant benefits in relation to health, community cohesion and general well being.

- 4.16 In addition to the general GI requirements, the National Forest is a component of the GI strategy. Policy 21 is supportive of development 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.

Design approach and integration - Green Infrastructure

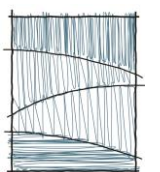
- 4.17 In respect of the approach to integrate the development with its landscape and townscape context, a number of the new assets will contribute to enhancement of the GI functionality of the site and this edge of settlement location, through:

1. Provision of new pedestrian routes facilitating greater levels of access for the community to open spaces and the opportunity to enjoy informal recreation and connect with the environment;
2. Soft engineering approach for the purpose of water management, which will serve to diversify the type of grassland and habitats. Using sustainable means for controlling run off coupled with enhanced biodiversity also makes a positive contribution to the recreational environment;
3. Inclusion of an equipped play area, this can use natural material to reflect the woodland context to the south and east. Provision of new recreational assets in close proximity to people's homes is critical in providing a positive environment for the health and wellbeing of the community;
4. Increased tree cover will provide ecological benefits, enhance the environment for the residents and contribute to Climate Change adaptation - a modest increase in tree canopy cover will have a positive effect on the urban heat island effect through evapotranspiration and shading;
5. The enhanced provision and greater variety of interconnected habitats, including grassland, scrub, tree groups and water features will enable species to diversify and migrate;
6. Sense of place - Creation of a network community open space, play area and woodland fringe directly accessible from the settlement edge, allowing the community to recreate, engage and connect to the landscape beyond and increase opportunity to enjoy the landscape and wider National Forest.

Summary of mitigation measures

Prevention/avoidance

- 4.18 As a starting point, the site avoids impacts on sensitive and highly valued locations. Specifically, the site is:



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

- Outwith any national statutorily designated landscape;
- Not within or near a Registered Historic Parks and Gardens;
- Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area; and
- Located in a settled landscape.

4.19 The site is located adjacent to the settlement edge in a location where it would form a natural extension to Markfield. Access would be achieved from the existing road network, thereby avoiding impacts on the character of the local road network beyond those already established.

Reduction/minimisation

- 4.20 Where hedgerows are lost in the creation of the access new tree planting is provided within the open space, in a quantum greater than that lost to the development proposals. The qualitative aspect of this provision is addressed in the ecology assessment.
- 4.21 Impacts on the mature trees is minimised extensively through their retention within an appropriate buffer during both the construction and development phases of the project.
- 4.22 During the construction phase the following measures will be adopted to minimise the likely effects:
- Existing trees and hedgerows that are to be retained within the Proposed Development will be protected.
 - Measures will be implemented to ensure that trees / hedgerows which will not be removed do not suffer direct damage through operations on Site or indirect damage from spillages within the root zone or storage, causing root compaction, in accordance with BS 5837:2012 and the Habitat Regulations, 1997.
- 4.23 Lighting that is necessary during the winter months of construction will be designed to minimise sky glow, light spill, and glare. The following mitigation should be delivered through an appropriately worded condition:
- Lighting will only focus on the area needed for construction activity, public amenity, and safety;
 - Up lighting will be kept to a minimum. Lighting equipment will be chosen to minimise the upward

- spread of light where possible, minimising the use of lighting columns; and
- To reduce the glare of lighting, the main beam angle will be adjusted so as not to be directed towards potential observers.

Enhancement measures

- 4.24 The following, additional measures are provided to enhance the settlement edge character and ensure longevity of notable and characteristic elements. These are shown on the Landscape Strategy plan which accompanies the planning application.
- New habitats and multifunctional green infrastructure, these are described in full in the DAS
 - The GI assets will be expanded above those found in the baseline situation to include a greater number of trees, sustainable drainage features, public access, increased provision of informal and formal recreation facilities.
- 4.25 Due to mitigation measures being designed into the scheme proposals, there are no predicted residual effects which require further mitigation.
- 4.26 The arrangement of the landscape elements, coupled with the treatment and functionality of the open space, are fundamental to the proposals to ensure appropriate assimilation and integration with the wider settlement edge and townscape character.

Iterative design approach

- 4.27 Notably since the initial recommendations were provided to the Applicant's team, other technical disciplines provided inputs to the constraints mapping which has refined the developable inputs.
- 4.28 It is recognised within the landscape and wider planning profession that Green Infrastructure (GI) should be integral to the design and layout of new areas of housing. Green Infrastructure is explored in the Landscape Institute's position papers (2009¹⁷, 2011¹⁸ and 2013¹⁹) which I contributed to. The concept of GI is to provide multifunctional landscapes and landscape assets and is illustrated on the Landscape Strategy Plan. The following

table (Table LV 4.2) summarised the positive aspects of the landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy as shown on the material prepared by Cornus Landscape Planning.

Table 4.2: Green Infrastructure provisions

Landscape Institute's GI recognised functionality	Observations
<i>Climate change adaption - Even a modest increase in tree canopy cover can significantly reduce the urban heat island effect via evapotranspiration and shading, as well as improving air quality, which often suffers because of higher temperatures</i>	Whilst there will be XX trees lost, and XX m of hedgerow (see Tree Survey and AIA), as a result of the access arrangements and delivery of the new homes, new tree planting will be distributed through the Site to deliver the following: • Reinforcement of the existing peripheral tree planting to ensure its longevity as a feature in the townscape. • Street trees to break up the appearance of the built form and provide shade within the Proposed Development. • Provision of new trees within open spaces. • The scheme provides for a greater quantum of trees being planted than removed
<i>Climate change mitigation, well-designed and managed GI can encourage people to travel in a more sustainable way, such as cycling and walking.</i>	The geographic location of the Site, in close proximity and adjacent to the existing network of rights of way and pedestrian footpaths, means occupants of the new development have the option to walk to the facilities within the settlement. The open space will provide a diverse range of safe and attractive links within open space and on tree lined streets to make the cycling and walking routes an attractive and safe alternative to the car.
<i>Water management GI is a good approach for managing flood</i>	The Proposed Development incorporates drainage ponds and swales as part of the water management strategy. The

¹⁷ Green Infrastructure: connected and multifunctional landscapes

¹⁸ Local Green Infrastructure Helping communities make the most of their landscape.

¹⁹ Green Infrastructure - An integrated approach to land use



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

risk. This can involve placing sustainable drainage systems (SUDs) in developments to attenuate surface water runoff and enhance biodiversity and recreation.

Food production
Creating space for food production through allotments and community gardens and orchards, increases access to healthy food, provides educational opportunities, contributes to food security, and reconnects communities with their local environment. Connecting local communities with these assets via footpaths and cycleways can encourage this reconnection further.

Biodiversity enhancement, corridors, and linkages The role of GI in providing wildlife habitat in both urban and rural areas is well established but taking a landscape-scale approach to the planning, design and management of

approach to the design will be part of a Reserved Matters Application (RMA). However, sensitive, natural forms of ponds and swales are highly valued by engineers, ecologists and landscape architects which ensure a sensitive, attractive, and positive feature in the landscape.

The profile of the ponds can be designed to deliver a variety of new ecological habitats and incorporate different plants to enhance the visual amenity of the feature. Provision of seating within the open space will benefit the local community and make a positive contribution to the sense of well-being.

The open space is positioned in close proximity to the community it serves and is accessible to the wider residential population through the existing network of footpaths. Subject to approval by the Council, the scheme can be designed to incorporate fruiting species (trees and shrubs, fruits, and nuts) to enhance the type of local cropping available to the community.

The ecological assessment sets out the suite of ecological benefits which will be delivered as part of the Proposed Development.

From a GI perspective, the benefits can be summarised as:

- Incorporation of **native plants and those of wildlife importance** into landscaping scheme to provide foraging opportunities for birds and bats. Achieved through wildflower grassland,

connected GI assets provides the framework within which species migration can more readily occur in response to environmental pressures such as climate change.

Recreation and health, accessible GI provides important opportunities for informal and active recreation. Ensuring that these assets are provided in close proximity to people's homes, are maintained properly, and are designed with the needs of local communities in mind, is critical to their positive role in public health and wellbeing.

shrub/thicket planting, SuDs features and wet basins and enhancement and management of onsite woodland and trees.

- Improved connectivity of green infrastructure with new hedgerow planting and infill planting, to include **reinstatement of historic hedgerows** where practicable.
- Provision of new and enhancement of existing wildlife ponds to increase availability of aquatic habitats for great crested newts and other amphibians within the area.
- Enhancement of on-site ditches.
- Provision of **new bat roosting and bird nesting opportunities** within new buildings and retained mature trees (numbers and specification to be determined at detailed design stage).

Overall, the proposed development of the Site would lead to a net gain in biodiversity when including off-site habitat creation.

Further details of the BNG Assessment will be provided as part of a BNGA Design Stage report, with details of botanical and protected species surveys provided within the relevant ES Chapter.

The Appeal Site is located on and in close proximity to the public rights of way network but currently there is no public access onto the land.

The provision of open space immediately accessible to the existing community at the southern edge of Potters Bar means residents have a greater quantum of open space in close proximity to their homes.

Economic values
Quality green space can have a major positive impact on land and property markets, creating settings for investment and acting as a catalyst for wider regeneration.

Local distinctiveness
Well-designed and managed GI assets, particularly those that engage local communities, and which relate to landscape character and heritage, can enhance local sense of place and foster community spirit.

Stronger communities GI can help in meeting a wide range of community needs. The spirit of the GI approach means that social, environmental, and economic potential is considered and optimised.

The location of the Site and its accessibility to the local network of footpaths, being positioned near to centres of education and sport facilities with properties fronting and framing the open space a well-design scheme is likely to have a positive effect on the profile and value of the Proposed Development for those who occupy it.

The layout and use of materials reflecting the local vernacular can make a positive contribution to the townscape of Potters Bar and create a distinctive sense of place on the edge of the settlement.

With the assets noted above there are opportunities to build homes which can integrate with the existing community.

The provision of new places to meet and recreate will be a benefit to the new residents and the existing community.

4.29 These measures are in line with the Council's guiding principles.



Section 5: Magnitude of change

- 5.1 The GLVIA3 recognises the importance of professional judgement in undertaking the assessment of effects in determining the likely significance of effects. To overcome the potential problems associated with the over-reliance on matrices and tabular summaries of effects, which have typically been used in the past, in the latest guidance there is a greater emphasis on the need for narrative text describing the landscape and visual effect and the judgements made on their significance.
- 5.2 The significance of the effect is a function of the sensitivity of the resource or receptor and the magnitude of the change. Having determined the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors in section 3 above, **Tables 5.1** and **5.2** set out the degree to which the landscape and visual environment is changed (magnitude of change) and how these changes are brought about.
- 5.3 GLVIA3 (paragraph 6.29) states:
- “...effects can be described as positive or negative (or in some cases neutral) in their consequences for views and visual amenity.”*

- 5.4 GLVIA3 does not, however, state how negative or positive effects should be assessed and therefore becomes a matter of subjective judgement rather than reasoned criteria.

Magnitude of landscape change

- 5.5 At the lower end of the spectrum the degree of change may be small, and the loss/addition of landscape features affecting only a limited proportion of the total extent which the resource contributes to the character. The changes are entirely consistent with the context, and the geographic extent to which the effects occur may be localised.
- 5.6 At the higher end of the spectrum the change may be over an extensive area with a high proportion of landscape elements which contribute the character of the area being lost or altered. The change may be at odds and incongruent with the context within which it occurs.

Lighting effects

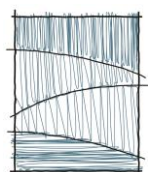
- 5.7 At this stage it is appropriate to touch on the issue of lighting and night-time effects. This does not form part of this LVIA for the following reasons:
- Leyton Place Limited is not a lighting consultancy.
 - The application is made in outline and there is no lighting strategy at this stage, this will be the subject of

the reserved matters application/discharge of conditions.

- 5.8 The Site is located on the immediate edge of the settlement and as such the following are existing sources of illumination in the vicinity of the Site:
- Lighting on roads and junctions
 - Traffic headlights travelling along the local roads
 - Light spill from properties abutting and in close proximity of the Site.
- 5.9 This is not a dark environment, changes to the lighting character will be consistent with the setting of the Site, albeit without the need for security/flood lighting, found elsewhere in views.

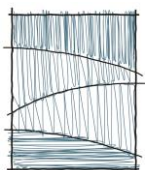
Table 5.1: Magnitude of Landscape Change

Landscape Resource	Sensitivity - set out in Section 3 above	Description of change Construction Phase	Description of change Completed Development	Magnitude of effect on landscape character/resource
National and regional landscape character areas		Given the scale of the published assessments and the localised geographic extent of change there will be no discernible change to the character and qualities of The Culm landscape character area.		No change to the character of these large scale character areas.
Landscape at the edge of Markfield (the application site and its immediate environment)	Lowest end of the spectrum (A)	During the construction phase the character and appearance of the Site will completely change. The dynamic activities in the site clearance, preliminary works, presence of construction traffic and changes to the components of the landscape will be incongruent to the baseline situation and nearby townscape and adjoining open landscapes. Beyond the red line area there will be no physical change to the landscape and townscape components. Noise emanating from the construction activities will influence the levels of	Following the completion of the development the character of the site, whilst altering from its current condition and character will complement and reflect the adjoining and established settlement edge (comprising residential and commercial uses). The changes are consistent with the townscape context of Markfield and contained to the application site.	During the construction phase the magnitude of change to the character of the site will be localised, phased, short term and adverse. The change lies towards the higher end of the spectrum (E). On completion the primary change will be the introduction of elements consistent with the established context. Whilst the character of the site will change, as with the current



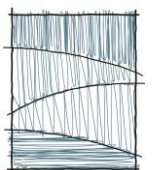
Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Landscape Resource	Sensitivity - set out in Section 3 above	Description of change Construction Phase	Description of change Completed Development	Magnitude of effect on landscape character/resource
		relative tranquility in adjoining land uses, particularly. The construction phase will be experienced for a period of 48 months following grant of permission, albeit areas of completed development will increase in terms of the proportion of the site affected over this timeframe.		settlement, it will become assimilated in the physical and perceptual environment of the town. The magnitude of change is in the mid-high part of the spectrum (D). The effect in terms of the components complementing and reflecting the context will be neutral, as places people live, work, and socialise in are not in themselves harmful. The proposals will contribute to the character and sense of place relating to the new settlement edge.
Attributes of the Site				
Landform	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum, with the northern edge being slightly more sensitive to development, albeit still at the lower end of the range of sensitivity.	Localised changes in levels relating to groundwork and the creation of building foundations will occur. However, the underlying form of the topography will be unchanged.	The resulting settlement extension will relate to the underlying and principal landform consistent with the existing settlement. The form of the development in terms of verticality and 'shape' will complement its context.	The changes both in the construction phases and at completion are highly localised. The magnitude of change once the construction phase is complete, will be at the mid-range of the spectrum and neutral in nature (C).
Hydrology	No discernible hydrology associated with the site.	During the construction phase there will be new features created to accommodate the drainage strategy for the proposals. There will be localised disruption through groundworks but no impacts on existing water features.	The proposals incorporate sustainable urban drainage features which also provide for ecological and amenity benefits.	The provision of new SUDs features is beneficial to the environment and people using the spaces within the settlement edge. The magnitude of change is at the higher end of the range, beneficial magnitude of change (E).
Land cover	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum	Existing vegetation - this will be retained within appropriately constructed tree protection fencing.	As part of the landscape strategy new hedgerows and groups of trees will be incorporated into the scheme, primarily within the open spaces, and along the line of the principal access road. There is scope in the reserved matters application to provide additional hedges within the internal housing layout, subject to design and approval. These will	During the construction phase the impacts on existing vegetation and grassland will be adverse, short-term, and localised. The magnitude of effect is mid-range and adverse (C). Post construction and with the completion of the development the



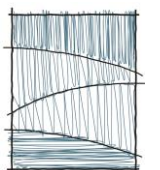
Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Landscape Resource	Sensitivity - set out in Section 3 above	Description of change Construction Phase	Description of change Completed Development	Magnitude of effect on landscape character/resource
			mature within a reasonable timeframe, particularly in the life-span of the development. From a landscape perspective these new elements will: • Compensate for any loss in the construction phase- therefore neutralising the adverse effects from the construction phase. • Enhance the provision of such features in the landscape, acknowledging that the integrity of these features has been in decline over a period of years. • Reflect the historic field pattern, anchoring the new housing to its landscape context. • Provide connectivity of habitats and wildlife corridors (see Ecological Impact Assessment for more detail). • Increase the level of tree cover and enhance functionality in respect of climate change. • Provide compartmentalisation within the development to assist with creating localised character and assisting with legibility within the new settlement edge. • Filter internal views of the housing.	provision of new hedgerows and tree belts results in a mid-high, beneficial magnitude of change (D).
Associations/Townscape	The sensitivity of the townscape is at the lower end of the spectrum	The existing townscape will not experience direct effects because of the construction phase. Nearby new greenfield development (to the southwest of the site) is occurring on a greater scale than required for this project.	The new housing will complement the existing townscape, whilst providing new spaces and landscape elements to enhance the settlement edge and provide a sensitive and transitional change rather than the abrupt 'hard edge' currently experienced.	During the construction phase the impacts on the character of the townscape will be in-direct, localised and will relate to off-site traffic movements. The magnitude of effect is mid to low-range and adverse (B). Post construction and with the completion of the development the provision of a considered housing and green infrastructure strategy the



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Landscape Resource	Sensitivity - set out in Section 3 above	Description of change Construction Phase	Description of change Completed Development	Magnitude of effect on landscape character/resource
				magnitude of effects will be mid-range, and beneficial (C).
Enclosure	The sensitivity of the enclosed character and features which determine the level of enclosure are at the mid-range of sensitivity.	The degree of enclosure will remain unchanged during the construction phase.	The completed and established development will improve the degree of enclosure of the settlement edge due to the increase in tree cover and framed open space.	During the construction phase the effects will be negligible. Post construction, and with the completion of the development, there will be a mid-high, beneficial magnitude of change in respect of enclosure (D).
Access	This attribute is at the mid-range of sensitivity to change.	No existing recreational access/routes will be lost during the construction phase. Temporary closure of the pedestrian footpath for the implementation of the site access will occur. The public right of way beyond the southern boundary will be unchanged, but people on the route will experience increased noise and activity.	On completion of the development there will be new accessible space for the local community.	During the construction phase the impacts on existing paths/recreational routes will be adverse, short-term, and localised. The magnitude of the effect is low to mid-range and adverse (B). Post construction, and with the completion of the development, the provision of new spaces and areas for children's play results in a mid-high, beneficial magnitude of change (D).
Relative tranquility	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum	During the construction phase the groundworks and site activities will cause localised disruption. The need for lighting during the winter months will affect the night-time conditions	The new housing and open space will result in no discernible change in the relative tranquility, being compatible with the baseline situation.	During the construction phase the magnitude of change to the character of the site will be localised, phased, short term and adverse. The change lies towards the higher end of the spectrum (E). On completion the new land uses will be consistent with the established context. The magnitude of change is in the low range of the spectrum (A).



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Magnitude of visual change

5.10 At the lower end of the spectrum the visual change may be small scale with no notable loss or addition to the view, the change is consistent with the baseline context and will not give rise a contrast in elements, form, colour and line,

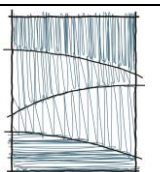
whilst the views are likely to be fleeting, glimpsed, or viewed infrequently.

5.11 At the higher end of the spectrum the changes will be large scale, with losses of key elements in the view and/or additional features which may be incongruent in the

composition. There is likely to be a contrast in scale, form, line and colour and the changes will affect a sizable proportion of the view, be fully visible. The duration of the view is likely to be prolonged and frequent.

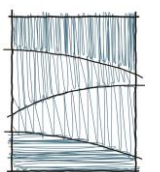
Table 5.2: Magnitude of visual change

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity - set out in Section 3 above	Description of change Construction Phase	Completed Development	Magnitude of effect
People using the local public rights of way network and pedestrian footpaths alongside roads. Representative viewpoints 1 to 3 and 7 to 10.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is within the mid-high range of the spectrum (D).	During the construction phase the views will be the subject of regular change, including seeing activities and elements which are incongruent with the baseline situation from the immediate boundaries of the site. Beyond the site the visual change will not be discernible.	Once complete the nature of the visual change will be barely discernible when viewed against the context of the established settlement. The components of the views will be consistent with the baseline situation, albeit housing will appear closer to those walking or driving on the local routes immediately abutting the site.	The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the higher end of the spectrum (E) and adverse in nature when seen from close views. From more distance vantage points the visual change will not be apparent. The overall composition and balance of elements will be unchanged. From these locations the magnitude of change during the construction phase will be at the lower end (A) of the spectrum and adverse. On completion of the development the nature of the change will be neutral in nature and in the low to mid part of the range. From the distant vantage points the magnitude of the change is negligible.
Users of road network, specifically Ratby Lane and Launde Road Representative viewpoints 7 to 10.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is at the lowest end of the spectrum (A).	During the construction phase the views will be the subject of regular change, including seeing activities and elements which are incongruent with the baseline situation. The visual change will be limited to a small component of a wider and unchanged view.	Once complete the degree of change will be barely discernible against the context of the established settlement.	The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the higher end of the spectrum (E) and adverse in nature. From more distance vantage points the visual change will not be apparent.



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity - set out in Section 3 above	Description of change Construction Phase	Completed Development	Magnitude of effect
				The overall composition and balance of elements will be unchanged. From these locations the magnitude of change during the construction phase will be at the lower end (A) of the spectrum and adverse. On completion of the development the nature of the change will be neutral in nature. From the distant vantage points the magnitude of the change is negligible. From those close to the site the magnitude of the change is at the mid-range.
Occupants of properties which abut the application site. No photography from private properties. See Figure 2.3 and photoviewpoints 4 and 6.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is within the mid to high range of the spectrum (D).	Construction activities, equipment and the phasing of change will result in notable and frequent changes in views. The views will be affected in phased manner with changes in the visual composition across the site for the 48 month construction phase. The change in view will be primarily experienced from first floor windows, as people look above fences and through tree canopies. However, the visual and perceptual change is likely to be experienced from ground floor rear facing windows to some degree.	For immediate residents the change will be a complete change in outlook, open farmland will be replaced by housing and gardens. In planning terms there is no right to a view, but the detailed design will need to ensure no impacts on the residential amenity of the existing properties	The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the higher (E) end of the spectrum and adverse in nature. On completion the magnitude of change will be adverse in nature (foreshortening views and changing the visual composition and balance of elements) and at the higher end of the spectrum (E).



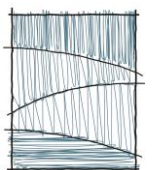
Section 6: Consequence of development

receptor (section 3) and the magnitude of change that resource or receptor experiences. These issues are combined to inform the judgement on the overall significance of effect. A summary of landscape and visual effects is set out in Tables 6.1 and 6.2

- 6.1 The determination of the significance of the effect is a function of the sensitivity of the landscape resource or visual

Table 6.1: Significance of effect - Landscape

Receptor	Sensitivity of receptor	Magnitude of change	Significance of effect - completed development
National and regional landscape character areas		No change	Not significant
Landscape at the edge of Markfield	Lowest end of the spectrum	During the construction phase the change lies towards the higher end of the spectrum. On completion the magnitude of change is in the mid-high part of the spectrum.	Significant resulting from the loss of open countryside to housing development. The effect is localised to the application site. Wider context is unchanged by the proposals.
Landform	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum.	The magnitude of change once the construction phase is complete will be at the mid-range of the spectrum and neutral in nature.	Not significant
Hydrology	No discernible hydrology associated with the site - negligible.	The magnitude of change is at the higher end of the range, beneficial magnitude of change.	Significant resulting from the diversification of habitats and amenity elements enhancing the character of the settlement edge and creating an appropriate transition. The effect is localised to the application site. Wider context is unchanged by the proposals.
Land cover	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum	During the construction phase the magnitude of the effect is mid-range and adverse. Post construction the development will result in a mid-high, beneficial magnitude of change.	Not significant
Associations/Townscape	The sensitivity of the townscape is at the lower end of the spectrum	During the construction phase the magnitude of effect is mid to low-range and adverse. Post construction and with the completion of the development the magnitude of effects will be mid-range, and beneficial.	Not significant

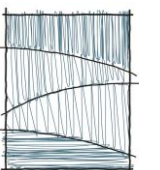


Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Enclosure	The sensitivity of the enclosed character and features which determine the level of enclosure are at the mid-range of sensitivity.	During the construction phase the effects will be negligible. Post construction, there will be a mid-high, beneficial magnitude of change in respect of enclosure.	Not significant
Access	This attribute is at the mid-range of sensitivity to change.	During the construction phase the magnitude of the effect is low to mid-range and adverse. Post construction, the development results in a mid-high, beneficial magnitude of change.	Significant resulting from the increase of accessible space and connecting routes. The effect is localised to the application site. Wider context is unchanged by the proposals.
Relative tranquility	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum	During the construction phase the change lies towards the higher end of the spectrum (E). On completion the magnitude of change is in the low range of the spectrum (A).	Not significant

Table 6.2: Significance of effect - Visual

Receptor	Sensitivity of receptor	Magnitude of change	Significance of effect - completed development
People using the local public rights of way network and pedestrian footpaths alongside roads. Representative viewpoints 1 to 3 and 7 to 10.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is within the mid-high range of the spectrum (D).	The construction phase will be at the higher end of the spectrum (E) and adverse. On completion of the development the nature of the change will be neutral in nature (comprising mixed elements with a 'green' aspect).	Not significant
Users of road network, specifically Ratby Lane and Launde Road Representative viewpoints 7 to 10.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is within the mid-range of the spectrum (C).	The construction phase will be at the higher end of the spectrum (E) and adverse in nature. On completion of the development the nature of the change will be neutral in nature at the mid-high range.	Not significant
Occupants of properties which abut the application site. No photography from private properties. See Figure 2.3 and photoviewpoints 4 and 6.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is at the higher range of the spectrum (E).	The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the higher (E) end of the spectrum and adverse in nature. On completion the magnitude of change will be adverse in nature (foreshortening views and changing the visual composition and balance of elements) and at the higher end of the spectrum (E).	Significant resulting from the reduction in open views from the properties.



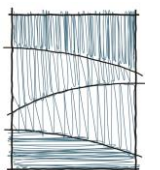
- 6.2 As expected, the greatest degree of change and disruption will be experienced during the construction phase, both in respect of the landscape, character, its features, and elements, and the visual environment for people living and moving around the area.

Significance of landscape effects

- 6.3 During the construction phase of the development programme there will be continuous change to the landscape (in terms of both construction on site and construction movements in the local area). It is recognised that this is the most disruptive phase of development. In terms of the character of the site and its immediate context, the character of the area will experience localised and notable change with the introduction of elements and features associated with the construction process which are uncharacteristic. The construction activities will give rise to significant and adverse effects. This disruption will last for the duration of the build programme. The construction effects for all of the landscape receptors will be temporary in nature.
- 6.4 The permanent (post implementation and establishment of the landscape measures - years 5 onwards) significant landscape effects identified by this assessment process relate to:
- ADVERSE Change to the landscape character and land use limited to the extents of the application site.
 - BENEFICAL through the provision of SUDs
 - BENEFICAL Public rights of way and public access - provision of new open space
- 6.5 The landscape effects will be localised and not experienced beyond the application site and local landscape.
- 6.6 The adverse effect on the character of the site, through the development of the settlement expansion, is balanced against the creation of a character of townscape which draws from and complements the local context. Furthermore, the new settlement edge provides for enhanced landscape features and greater public access.
- 6.7 The landscape effects are highly localised, and the changes are consistent with the established settled character of this part of the River Axe floodplain.

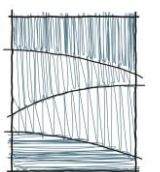
Significance of visual effects

- 6.8 During the construction phase of the development programme there will be continuous change to the views experienced by residents and those moving around the area. It is recognised that this is the most disruptive phase of development. The views will include incongruent elements, such as scaffolding, construction vehicles and plant. The viewers will experience frequent change on a daily basis; however, the duration of this change during the construction phase is temporary and short-term.
- 6.9 The degree of change diminishes with distance, so the greatest effects are experienced from those places in close proximity to the application site.
- 6.10 Significant, adverse, and permanent visual effects will occur in respect of those residents adjoining or in close proximity to the site.

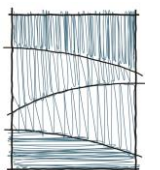


Section 7: Summary

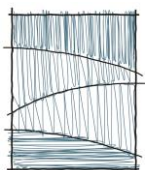
- 7.1 It is acknowledged that any development of greenfield locations for new housing will give rise to landscape and visual change. This can be experienced to the southwest of the site, as new housing is being constructed. The fact that change will occur is not in itself harmful or adverse, such change has created the settlements and street scenes that are valued by communities and the people that live in them. It is inevitable that the most appropriate location for new homes, of the scale required, will be in the 'open countryside' abutting settlements across the district.
- 7.2 In respect of the natural environment, as a point of fact, the site is not covered by specific policies listed in the NPPF, paragraph 11, footnote 7, including:
- SSSI;
 - Habitat Sites;
 - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
 - National Park;
 - Heritage Coast;
 - Irreplaceable habitats;
 - Areas at risk of flooding or coastal change; and
 - Designated heritage assets.
- 7.3 In respect of NPPF Paragraph 187 b) the landscape character of the area has been recognised in the development of the proposals. This is not a valued landscape (NPPF 187 a)
- 7.4 The locational benefits of the Site can be summarised as:
- Located abutting the settlement edge, utilising the existing infrastructure;
 - Outwith any national statutorily designated landscape;
 - Not within or near other designated landscapes, such as Ancient Woodland or Registered Historic Parks and Gardens;
 - Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area;
 - Not within an NPPF 'valued landscape.'
- 7.5 The applicant has commissioned a wide range of technical specialists to evaluate the site's capacity and the most appropriate development response.
- 7.6 The masterplan has been informed by extensive, comprehensive, and detailed technical analysis across a range of disciplines, cognisant of the council's previous concerns in respect of alternative scheme proposals. The team's collaborative design approach has sought to respond positively to the environmental constraints. The new settlement edge is permeable in terms of access and visibility, rich in landscape assets and delivers a variety of spaces, functions, and environmental benefits.
- 7.7 The applicant's team has taken a robust approach to the analysis of the locale, its technical constraints and relationship with the settlement edge, to create a complementary area of new housing within a connected framework of multifunctional green infrastructure serving the local and wider community. The collaborative approach to the project is important as it enables a comprehensive solution to growth.
- 7.8 The proposals for this application have been approached with new consultants to ensure that the proposals respond positively to their location and are landscape-led, to minimise the adverse effects and maximise benefits to the landscape and the local community.



Appendix 1: Building Heights Plan



Appendix 2: Glossary



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Assessment Criteria and Spectrum ‘ends’

As an introduction at paragraph 3.26 of GLVIA the following criteria are noted as the principal components to the assessment process:

- i. Criteria for establishing sensitivity are:
 - The susceptibility of the receptor to the type of change arising
 - Value of the receptor
- ii. Criteria for establishing magnitude of change include:
 - Size and scale of the effect
 - Geographic extent
 - Duration and reversibility of the effect.

Within the LVIA the following criteria inform the professional judgements

'Landscape' criteria

Landscape Value

Landscape Value criteria (by reference to LI TGN 01/21)

- Natural heritage
- Cultural heritage
- Landscape condition
- Associations
- Distinctiveness
- Recreational
- Perceptual Qualities

These feed into the scale of classification of National/International, District and Local.

Landscape susceptibility

The susceptibility criteria are the degree to which the change fits with the character based on:

- Pattern
- Grain
- Use
- scale
- massing
- ability to mitigate

At the highest end of the 'susceptibility spectrum' is a landscape wherein changes in terms of the Proposed Scheme would be entirely at odds with the character of the local area, related to matters including pattern, grain, use, scale, and mass. The Proposed Scheme would require extensive change to the topography, vegetative cover, or form of buildings.

Mid-way on the spectrum is a landscape wherein the Proposed Scheme has a degree of consistency with the existing scale, pattern, grain, land use of the prevailing character, although mitigation may be appropriate to enhance assimilation.

At the lower end of the spectrum the Proposed Scheme is entirely consistent with the character of the local area, related to matters including pattern, grain, use, scale, and mass.

Landscape sensitivity

In accordance with paragraph 3.26 of GLVIA, the criteria for assigning landscape sensitivity is a function of the susceptibility of the receptor and the value of the landscape.

At the lower end of the spectrum (low sensitivity) resources may be; low valued/undesigned landscapes, with no distinctive or sensitive features, with the potential to accommodate appropriately design development, and where adverse effects can be mitigated for.

At the higher end of the range are; those highly valued/designated landscapes recognised in policy, may contain landscape features that cannot accommodate development of the type proposed, and where mitigation measures are unable to avoid, compensate or offset the undue consequences which would arise.

Magnitude of landscape change

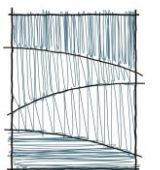
In line with the suggested criteria in GLVIA (paragraphs 5.49 to 5.52) the criteria which inform the professional judgement on the magnitude of change are:

- The scale and degree of change - measured by reference to consistency with the baseline situation.
- The degree to which the change relates to characteristic elements (proportion of characteristic elements affected)
- The geographic extent over which the change is experienced.

At the lower end of the spectrum the degree of change may be small, and the loss/addition of landscape features affecting only a limited proportion of the total extent to which the resource contributes to the character. The changes may be entirely consistent with the context, and the geographic extent to which the effects occur may be localised.

At the higher end of the spectrum the change may be over an extensive area with a high proportion of landscape elements which contribute to the character of the area being lost or altered. The

change may be at odds and incongruent with the context within which it occurs.



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

‘Visual’ criteria

Value attached to views

The criteria for establishing the value of views are:

- Status of footpaths and pedestrian routes
- Value ascribed by designation
- Documented viewpoints

Susceptibility to visual change

The susceptibility criteria is set out in paragraphs 3.27 to 3.28 of the LVIA, these are considered with GLVIA 3 at paragraph 6.32, namely:

- Occupation of the people experiencing the view
- The focus in the visual context
- Duration and frequency of views

Visual sensitivity

In accordance with paragraph 3.26 of GLVIA, the criteria for assigning visual sensitivity are the susceptibility of the receptor and the value of the view.

At the lower end of spectrum may be those people engaged in an activity which is not focused on the landscape or context of the person/people, where the views are infrequent, the representative or specific viewpoints are not associated with a valued landscape or asset.

At the higher end of the spectrum people are engaged in an activity whereby the focus of the visual experience is linked to the landscape context, the views are associated with a valued landscape or important assets/landmarks, and the number or people and frequency of the visual experience is high.

Magnitude of visual change

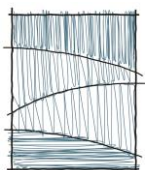
In line with GLVIA (paragraphs 6.38 to 6.41), the criteria which inform the professional judgement on the magnitude of change, are:

- Scale of change - proportion of view affected and components therein
- Degree to which the change is consistent with the baseline composition
- Duration of the visual change (as part of the journey)

At the lower end of the spectrum the visual change may be small scale with no notable loss or addition to the view, the change is consistent with the baseline context and will not give rise to a

contrast in elements, form, colour, and line, whilst the views are likely to be fleeting, glimpsed, or viewed infrequently.

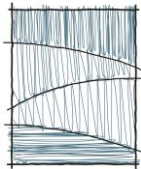
At the higher end of the spectrum the changes will be large scale, with losses of key elements in the view and/or additional features which may be incongruent in the composition. There is likely to be a contrast in scale, form, line and colour and the changes will affect a sizable proportion of the view, be fully visible. The duration of the view is likely to be prolonged and frequent.



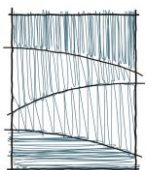
Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Glossary

Character	A distinct, recognisable, and consistent pattern of elements, features and qualities in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.	Landscape	An area, as perceived by people, the character of which is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.		the specific type of change or development
Characteristics / elements	Features and qualities which make a particular contribution to distinctive character.	Landscape Character Areas	These are single unique areas which are the discrete geographical areas if a particular landscape type.	Significance	proposed and the value related to that receptor.
Characterisation	The process of identifying areas of similar character, classifying, and mapping them and describing their character.	Landscape effects	Effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right.	Susceptibility	A measure of the importance or gravity of the environmental effect defined by significance criteria specific to the environmental topic.
Effects	The process of identifying areas of similar character, classifying, and mapping them and describing their character.	Landscape quality (condition)	A measure of the 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.	Visual Amenity	The ability of a defined landscape and visual receptor to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences.
	These are the effects that result from the impacts (changes) of the proposed development. Direct effects are directly attributable to the proposed development, Indirect effects result indirectly from the proposed project but are because of the direct impacts, often occurring away from the Site, or because of a sequence of interrelationships or a complex pathway. They may be separated by distance of in time from the source of the impacts.	Landscape Value	The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons.	Visual effects	The overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting, or travelling through an area.
		Magnitude (of effect)	A term that combines judgements about the size and scale of the effect, the extent of the area over which it occurs, whether it is reversible or irreversible and whether it is short or long term in duration.	Visual Envelope	Effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.
Element	Individual component parts of the landscape such as field boundaries, woodlands, patches of similar vegetation, outbuildings, structures, and rock outcrops.			Visual receptors	An area validated by fieldwork from which the Proposals are visible from, typically informed by the ZTV (see below).
Feature	Particularly prominent or eye-catching elements e.g., wooded hilltop or chapel, or a particular aspect of this project.	Sense of Place	The unique experience that arises because of being in or walking through a particular locality, generally as a response to the specific characteristics and quality of the area.	Visual receptors	Individuals and/or defined groups of people who have the potential to be affected by a proposal
Impacts	The changes occurring because of the proposed development, the causation of effects.			Visualisation	A computer simulation, photomontage or other technique illustrating the predicted appearance of a development.
		Sensitivity (of Landscape)	The inherent sensitivity of the landscape itself, irrespective of the type of change that may occur. In this project, it is divided into cultural, ecological, and visual sensitivity. A term applied to specific receptors, combining judgments of the susceptibility of the receptor to	Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)	A map showing areas of land within which a development is theoretically visible.
Land Cover	Combinations of natural and man-made elements including vegetation that cover the land surface.				



Appendix 3: Bibliography

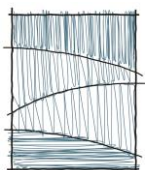


Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

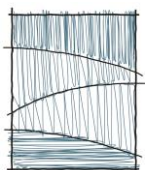
Bibliography

- (i) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, LI²⁰ and IEMA, 2013. Third Edition
- (ii) Landscape Institute Technical Information Note: Townscape Character Assessment, 05/2017, Revised April 2018
- (iii) Reviewing Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIAs) and Landscape and Visual Appraisals (LVIAs), Technical Guidance Note 1/20 (10 Jan 2020)
- (iv) Visual Representation of Development Proposals, Technical Guidance Note 06/19, Landscape Institute, September 2019.
- (v) European Landscape Convention, Council of Europe, October 2000
- (vi) An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, Natural England (2014)
- (vii) Assessing landscape value outside national designations, LI, February 2021, Technical Guidance Note 02/21
- (viii) Green Infrastructure: connected and multifunctional landscapes. LI, 2009
- (ix) Green Infrastructure: An approach to land use. LI 2013
- (x) Public Health and Landscape: Creating healthy places. LI 2013
- (xi) European Landscape Convention, Council of Europe October 2000
- (xii) An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment. Natural England. 2014
- (xiii) Impact Assessment Outlook Journal, Volume 11: October 2021 The relationship between planning policy and LVIA (Paul Macrae and Edward White) IEMA
- (xiv) National Character Area Profiles, Natural England, 2014 /www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles
- (xv) East Midlands Regional Landscape Character Assessment (2010), LDA on behalf of East Midlands Landscape Partnership
- (xvi) Charnwood Forest Landscape Character Assessment (2019), FPCR on behalf of The National Forest Company (update to 2008 study)
- (xvii) Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Landscape Character Assessment 2017, LUC commissioned by Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
- (xviii) Hinckley & Bosworth Landscape Sensitivity Study 2017 LUC commissioned by Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
- (xix) Green infrastructure Strategy for Hinckley and Bosworth (July 2020)
- (xx) Landscape Sensitivity Assessment of SHLAA Sites For Charnwood Borough Final Report Prepared for Charnwood Borough by LUC March 2019

²⁰ Landscape Institute (LI)

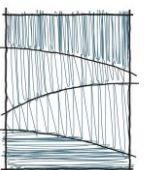


Appendix 4: Extracted material from published characterisations

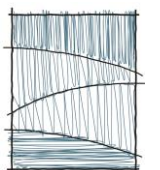


Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

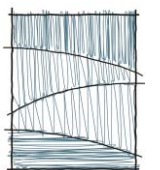
4a: East Midlands Regional Landscape Character Assessment



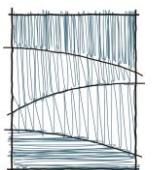
4b: Charnwood Forest Landscape Character Assessment



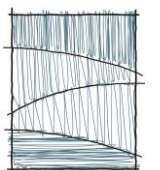
4c: Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Landscape Character Assessment



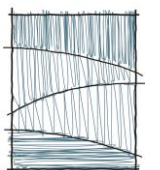
4d: Hinckley & Bosworth Landscape Sensitivity Study



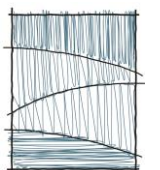
Appendix 5: Photoviewpoints 1-13 (Summer views)



Appendix 6: Photoviewpoints 1-13 (Winter views)



Appendix 7: Consideration of policy matters



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

The landscape policy context and scheme design

A.1 As noted in the IEMA publication, 'Impact Assessment Outlook Journal, Volume 11: October 2021, The relationship between planning policy and LVIA'

"The judgements made in an LVIA should be based by the assessor on the nature of the receptors, and the nature of the change arising from the development, as GLVIA3 recommends. Policy sets the context for these judgements but should not directly influence them. To do so could result in no significant effects being found, regardless of the quality of the proposal or the effects arising from it. If a development of a site would lead to significant effects, surely these should be reported whether the site is allocated or not. Finding no significant effects would suggest that the development is 'acceptable,' which is rightly a matter for the decision maker to consider in the round, taking account of all the evidence in front of them. Mitigation, in the form of design enhancements, is generally developed in response to significant effects. If the application of policy led to no significant effects, it would be difficult to justify such measures.

Policy may indicate the in-principal acceptance of landscape change, but it is for the LVIA to quantify this change as a judgement of effects, and to focus on the iterative design process to ensure the development is integrated into the landscape in the best possible way."

A.2 Simply, compliance with policy does not influence the judgements made in respect of the degree of change and its significance.

A.3 This short appendix sets out how the landscape policy context has influenced the masterplan. From a landscape and visual perspective, the relevant policies are:

National Planning Policy Framework

A.4 **Paragraph 187 (b)**²¹ states decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

"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"

A.5 The masterplan has been informed by, and responded to, a range of environmental issues which have been assessed by a team of specialist consultants. The council has published its evidence base, including the assessment of the landscape character of the area. This information and site specific assessment of the landscape and ecological character and assets of the area has driven the principle spatial distribution of development within the site and the provision of enhancement measures.

A.6 Woodland and tree cover is retained and increased and new areas of wetland, which complement the existing character and natural capital are provided.

Hinckley and Bosworth adopted Core Strategy

THE ENVIRONMENT

Spatial Objective 9: Identity, Distinctiveness and Quality of Design To ensure development contributes to the local distinctiveness of the borough and enhances both settlement identity and the environment through the quality of sustainable design. Design and other measures will be used to develop strong community identities and neighbourhood pride.

A.7 The masterplan has been informed by the analysis undertaken by the consultant team, in particular the landscape planning consultant, urban designer and ecologist. The proposals respect the existing settlement context in terms of the character of the house, pattern, grain and arrangement of dwellings within the landscape framework and delivers a soft transitional edge to Markfield through the inclusions of multifunctional Green Infrastructure.

Spatial Objective 10: Natural Environment and Cultural Assets To deliver a linked network of green infrastructure, enhancing and protecting the borough's distinctive landscapes, woodlands, geology,

archaeological heritage, and biodiversity and encourage its understanding, appreciation, maintenance, and development.

A.8 The masterplan provides for a variety of new habitats which enhance the existing natural assets and link and connect the functional Green Infrastructure.

Spatial Objective 11: Built Environment and Townscape Character To safeguard, enhance and where necessary regenerate the borough's distinctive built environment including its wider setting particularly that associated with Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, and historic industries.

A.9 There are no historic assets or conservation areas affected by the proposals. The townscape which provides the context to the site is not valued and has few notable and positive attributes. The proposals seek to draw on the positive qualities that exist in the immediate vicinity of the site and enhance the townscape with new architecture and landscape elements.

²¹ 174 a) is addressed in the LVA in respect of the value of the landscape

