Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Appeal by David Wilson Homes North West and A C Surveyors and Valuers
Against Non-Determination by Ribble Valley Borough Council
of a Planning Application for the Erection of 116 No Two, Three, Four and Five Bedroom Dwellings and 21 No
One Bedroom Bungalows Together with Associated Landscaping, Open Space, Drainage Infrastructure, Car
Parking and Access Road at Land to South of Mitton Road, Whalley

PUBLIC INQUIRY

TO BE HELD ON 15 - 24 MAY 2013

Site at south of Mitton Road, Whalley

DOE PLANNING INSPECTORATE REFERENCE APP/T2350/A/12/2188887/NWF
LPA PLANNING APPLICATION REFERENCE 3/2012/06337/P
NGR SD 372748 436398

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY (Volume 2)
of
Mr Aydin Zorlutuna BA(Hons) LA, Dip LA, CMLI

On Behalf of the Local Planning Authority

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Warrington
WA1 1RG
United Kingdom
2. Methodology

2.1 I have set out below the methodology I have used for assessing the landscape and visual effects of the proposed Development. A summary of this is also included in my Proof of Evidence Volume 1.

Assessment Methodology Summary

2.2 The landscape and visual assessment of the proposed Development covers two distinct but related areas comprising:

2.3 The assessment of the impacts on the landscape. This includes the systematic description and analysis of the features, and the distinct and recognisable patterns which they create, within a particular area in addition to the way these are perceived and experienced; the sensitivity of these features or areas to change; and the changes that may occur as a result of the construction and operation of the proposed Development. This encompasses the description of landform, vegetation cover, settlement, transport patterns and land use as well as any landscape and townscape relevant designations. The assessment has considered other interrelated matters such as cultural and heritage matters, in particular the setting of the Whalley Conservation Area, the Abbey SAM and the Listed Railway viaduct, and the wider landscape setting of the historic townscape and Whalley settlement.

2.4 The assessment of the visual amenity impacts on receptors and their views. This includes the identification of the existing visual amenity receptors and a description of the views that people within the study area experience; analysis of the sensitivity of these receptors to change; and a description of the changes to views that would result from the of the construction and operation of the proposed Development. Views from public open space, public rights of way, transport corridors and residential properties are also assessed.

Study Area

2.5 Defining the study area is based on survey work and desk based study. Visual receptors are identified as a result of having a potential view to the application site and its associated features.
2.6 The first stage is to identify the Theoretical Zone of Visual Influence (TZVI) and assumes a bare earth scene, taking account of landform only. For the purposes of TZVI we concur with the appellant’s Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) Plan 1: Topography and First Sieve GIS Visual Analysis as it indicates the theoretical limit to which the proposed Development could be potentially viewed.

2.7 The second stage is to then verify through site visits the distance and proximity to the application site from which potential visual receptors might experience views. For the purposes of defining the study to this effect we concur with the appellant’s LVIA Plan 3: Verified Visual Envelope & Visual Receptors (Note, however, that this agreement does not extend to the verification of a visual envelope, the limit of visual receptors and other content of Plan 3).

Source of Baseline Data

2.8 This proof of evidence is based on a combination of desk studies including internet searches and site surveys within the study area. This existing or baseline assessment establishes the existing situation against which the effects of the proposed Development are assessed.

Desk Study

2.9 An initial desk study was undertaken to review existing mapped, written and internet data.

2.10 The relevant development plans, policies and designations were studied to gain an understanding of the ‘importance,’ ‘value’ and ‘sensitivity’ of designated features attributed to the landscape and visual resource by the national and local government and are identified in Section 3 and section 4.

2.11 Previously published assessments and reports were studied to gain an understanding of the overall character, quality and sensitivity to change of the existing landscape within the study area. These included:

- National Character Areas (NCA 33 and NCA 35) (Natural England) – (See Volume 4: Appendices)
The Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: Landscape Character Assessment (Lancashire County Council, September 2009) – (CD 17)


Whalley Conservation Area Management Guidance (Ribble Valley Borough Council, 2005) – (CD 14)

Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11 Photography and Photomontage in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – (See Volume 4: Appendices)

Scottish Natural Heritage Visual Representation of Windfarms: Good Practice Guidance 2006 – (See Volume 4: Appendices)

Landscape Character Assessment, Topic Paper 6: Criteria for making judgements on capacity and sensitivity (Natural England & Scottish Natural Heritage) – (See Volume 4: Appendices)

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (Ribble Valley Borough Council, December 2008) – (CD21)

2.12 Maps were studied to gain an understanding of the landform, location of public rights of way, areas of open access and the extent and type of vegetation and land use. These included:

- Ordnance Survey (OS) Vector map District
- Ordnance Survey (OS) West Pennine Moors, Blackburn, Darwen and Accrington Ref: 287 scale 1:25,000
- OS Land-Form Panorama (Free map) height data

**Site Surveys**

2.13 In undertaking this proof of evidence I have made three site visits under various weather conditions and have also taken the photographs shown in Volume 3, Figures and Viewpoints.

2.14 My walkover site survey included walking the public rights of way near to the proposed Development site as well as selected publicly accessible areas within the wider study area, such as public highways, public open spaces, public rights of way and national /
regional Trails. This enabled me to gain an understanding of both the existing landscape and visual features, including views to and the potential effects of the proposed Development.

2.15 As it is important to the landscape and visual assessment of the site I have also experienced a train journey from Langho Railway Station to Whalley Railway Station as the northbound route provides direct views to the west from the railway viaduct onto and across the application site and study area.

2.16 The proof of evidence follows the guidelines produced by the relevant professional bodies concerned with landscape and visual assessment. This includes the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), Second Edition (2), 2002 as published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (CD 33). Although GLVIA Third Edition was due to be released on 3rd April 2013 the publication date has been deferred and, as such, the proof of evidence follows GLVIA 2 guidelines.

2.17 The assessment of landscape and visual effects is based on a selection of viewpoints. These are identified in Table 4-5. Their locations are indicated in Volume 3, Figure UA005852-03, Viewpoint Location Plan. In my professional opinion I believe these viewpoints to be representative of the view from public highways, the railway, national trails and the footpath and cycle networks as experienced by walkers and cyclists or those which are experienced by tourists, the community and select residential properties. These viewpoints have been selected to provide a balanced and realistic representation of views experienced from a selection of the above receptors. i.e. they have not been selected to exclusively represent the worst case impression of the proposed development.

2.18 Where appropriate I have selected viewpoints that are also identified in other studies, including reference to the Whalley Conservation Area Appraisal's Important Views (CD 13), and the appellant's Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, July 2012 (CD1). I have however, also used a number of additional viewpoints to support this proof of evidence. The reason for this is that, in my opinion, the appellant's viewpoints do not adequately cover the typical views experienced from immediately around the application site and the wider landscape from which it can be viewed. For convenience I have included both my own viewpoint location references and the appellant's viewpoint locations in Volume 3, Figure UA005852-03, Viewpoint Location Plan.
2.19 I also confirm the photography has been carried out following the guidance in the Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11 and Scottish Natural Heritage Visual Representation of Windfarms: Good Practice Guidance 2006 – (Volume 4, Appendices). Therefore I have used a 35mm equivalent focal length digital camera for photography. I have used a representative field of vision for the primary viewpoint image, but note that this is often not how the wider view is perceived or experienced. I have therefore included, where possible, a contextual photograph of the wider panoramic view, though this is not provided at a print size to be used as representing the wider view (with reference to good practice guidance).

Baseline Conditions Assessment

2.20 The assessment of baseline conditions, also known as existing conditions, includes the description and analysis of the sensitivity of:

- Landscape elements
- Landscape character
- Visual amenity receptors and their views

2.21 The existing context has been assessed as the two distinct but related aspects of Landscape baseline conditions and visual baseline conditions.

**Landscape Baseline Conditions**

2.22 The existing conditions of the landscape include an assessment of the following:

- Landscape and townscape Designations;
- The application site characteristics and its sensitivity;
- Landscape and townscape character of the wider study area and their sensitivity;
- The value and importance of the application site in relation to its landscape setting and location in relation to the townscape and settlement boundary;

**Visual Baseline Conditions**

2.23 The existing conditions of visual amenity and visual receptors include an assessment of the following:

- Visual Amenity Receptors and their sensitivity;
• Representative viewpoints to demonstrate the visual amenity, value and sensitivity of the application site;

• Representative viewpoints to demonstrate wider landscape and townscape character, visual amenity, value and sensitivity.

**Landscape Value, Sensitivity and Capacity**

2.23 As part of the process about making judgements on landscape sensitivity it is also important to understand landscape capacity. With reference to Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity, Box 1, page 2 (Volume 4, Appendices) “Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character type or area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type. Capacity is likely to vary according to the type and nature of change being proposed”.

2.24 With reference to Topic Paper 6, page 20 (Volume 4, Appendices) landscape capacity is defined as a function of landscape character sensitivity, visual sensitivity and landscape value.

**Public Perception Considerations**

2.25 As part of the assessment of value and importance of the application site and the wider landscape and townscape character we have considered both local and regional public perception as recognised through a variety of media. This is an important consideration in understanding the way in which this landscape is valued by people and thereby in assessing the landscape value and sensitivity of the site and its wider landscape character setting. What I have discovered in my research is that the viaduct is emblematic of Whalley village and the wider locality, as illustrated in children’s murals in historic photographs and on the opening credits of the regional BBC One news. Consistently these representations always show the viaduct in open countryside. This is the way in which people identity with the viaduct as a landmark structure and how the viaduct is identified with the village in its landscape setting. This image is a measure of the way in which people associate with and experience Whalley, and is thereby a critical aspect of its sense of place regional importance. A selection of these images are included in Volume 3, Figure UA005852-04, Public Perception.
Significance Criteria for Landscape and Visual Effects

2.26 The assessment of effects includes the description and analysis of:

- Landscape & Townscape Sensitivity / Visual Receptor Sensitivity
- The magnitude of change
- The significance of effect
- The nature of effect.

2.26 The significance and nature of landscape character and visual amenity effects is determined by considering the relationship between the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors and the magnitude of change.

2.27 The correlation between the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptor and the magnitude of change used to determine the significance of effects is outlined in the matrix in Table 2-1. It is noted the matrix is not a ‘prescriptive’ tool and the analysis of potential significant effects must make allowance to exercise professional judgement with justification. For example, a high sensitivity receptor which experiences a low magnitude of change and a medium sensitivity receptor which experiences a medium magnitude of change may result in a different outcome, which is dependent on professional judgement.

Table 2-1 Matrix for Significance of Landscape, Townscape and / or Visual Effect (GLVIA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Magnitude of Change</th>
<th>Receptor Sensitivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td>Very Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negligible</td>
<td>Slight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Change</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.28 A landscape assessment is a qualitative assessment expressed against objective criteria but based upon reasoned professional judgement. In some boxes where there are two significance of effect outcomes (e.g. a high sensitivity receptor undergoing a minor magnitude of change can result in either a Slight or Moderate significance of...
effect) I have made a judgement on the appropriate significance outcome, based on a
transparent and robust appraisal. With reference to the EIA Regulations I would
consider a Significant effect to result from one which is Moderate or greater. For
convenience potential significant effect outcomes have been shaded grey in table 2.1
above.

2.29 I have also reported the nature of effects in terms of whether they are positive
(beneficial), negative (adverse) or no change (neutral), short, medium or long-term,
permanent or temporary, or cumulative.

**Duration**

2.31 I have used the following terminology to describe the duration of the effect:
- Temporary: up to 12 months
- Short-term: 1-5 years
- Medium-term: 6-10 years
- Long-term: over 10 years
- Permanent: over 50 years

**Magnitude of Change, Significance and Nature of Effect**

2.30 I have considered the magnitude of change and significance and nature of the effects
during the Construction phase and the Operational phase for the following receptors:
- The Application Site
- The surrounding Landscape and Townscape Character Areas (with reference to
  Volume 3, UA005852-02 – Proposed Site Specific Landscape & Townscape
  Character Areas).
- The Visual Amenity Receptors and Views (with reference to Volume 3,
  UA005852-03 – Viewpoint Location Plan & Viewpoints).

**Cumulative Effects**

2.31 With reference to GLVIA (CD 33) page 85, paragraph 7.12 “Cumulative landscape and
visual effects result from additional changes to the landscape or visual amenity caused
by the proposed development in conjunction with other developments.”
2.32 In preparing this proof of evidence I have looked at other existing and potential capacity for development as part of the baseline and have taken this in to account when making judgements on the landscape capacity and sensitivity of the study area to accommodate change as a result of the proposed Development. (See section 4 and 5). Potential development sites with an existing LPA commitment are identified in Volume 3, UA005852-02 – Proposed Site Specific Landscape & Townscape Character Areas).

**Assessment of Construction**

2.33 For the purposes of this assessment I have assumed that the construction of the proposed 137 dwellings would be phased at a rate of approximately 30 dwellings per annum over a period of 4 to 5 years.

**Assessment of Mitigation**

2.34 I have assessed the landscape mitigation proposals with reference to the appellant’s Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (CD 1) Plan 6: Landscape Strategy and the Design and Access Statement (CD 1).

**Assessment of Enhancement**

2.35 For the purposes of this evidence I do not consider that any enhancement to the mitigation proposals will offer any reduction to the permanent operational effect of the proposed development.

**Assessment of Residual Impacts**

2.36 For the purposes of this evidence I consider that the residual effects (i.e. post-mitigation) will be equivalent to the permanent operational effects of the development proposals and therefore have assessed only the latter.

**Limitations to Assessment and Assumptions**

2.37 Wherever possible the photographs were taken during clear conditions. However, in some instances, due to the variable nature in the weather and the relative remoteness of some viewpoints, there is variation under which the photography has been taken. In addition, as the site surveys have been carried out during winter months, I have had to make assumptions on the potential visual impacts of the proposed Development during
the summer months, when the deciduous tree canopies and field hedgerows are in full leaf.

Additional Detail to Assessment Methodology

**The Application Site and its Sensitivity**

2.38 The determination of sensitivity is dependent on the site value and aesthetic and experiential quality as well as whether its elements / characteristics can be restored, replaced or substituted. These are defined below:

- The value of a site is a reflection of the importance of its physical elements / characteristics which contribute to the wider landscape character. The value of it will be increased if it is within a landscape relevant designation and contributes to the characteristics that make the area special. In addition, the site may also be recognised in policy or statute, for example, assets with cultural, historical or ecological connections. Such considerations will further increase the value of the site.

- The aesthetic quality of the site is a reflection of its condition and state of repair, for example a hedgerow may be poorly managed.

- Whether the elements and characteristics can be restored, replaced or substituted will also affect its sensitivity. It may be possible for example to replace a hedgerow which has been removed, to reinstate and even improve the feature and offer beneficial effects.

2.39 The criteria I have used to describe the sensitivity of the application site are described in Table 2-2. Sensitivity is graded in terms of high, medium, and low.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>(Not applicable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>• Important landscape elements / characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• May be present within a landscape relevant designation and may contribute to the features that make the area ‘special’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Well-managed and maintained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May be subject to local recognition through designation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to replace and their loss would be detrimental to the wider landscape</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately important landscape elements / characteristics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They may be within a local or regional landscape relevant designation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Their loss could be detrimental to the wider landscape</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unimportant landscape elements / characteristics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatively common and their loss would not affect the landscape characteristics of the area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be replaced, restored or substituted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Landscape Character of the wider study area and their Sensitivity**

2.40 Landscape character is defined as a distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occur consistently in a particular type of landscape. My starting point for making judgements on landscape sensitivity is with reference to other character assessment work. However, following best practice guidance it is vital to assess both the site specific and wider landscape character and sensitivity to change.

2.41 With reference to existing character assessments at national, regional and local level I have prepared site specific landscape and townscape character area mapping. This has been prepared with consideration to Whalley settlement boundary, its historic assets and their setting and the landscape elements, characteristics and qualities.

2.42 The determination of sensitivity is dependent on the landscape character area’s value and quality as well as whether the landscape character area can accommodate change in the form of the proposed Development. These are defined below:

- Value is the relative importance attached to a landscape, often established through designations or other recognition, such as a tourist attraction or presence in the arts and media. Landscapes or combinations of different landscapes, which are rare or unusual, may also be particularly ‘valued’
- Quality is based on judgements about the condition of the features that contribute to the distinctive characteristics of the area.
2.43 The criteria I have used to describe sensitivity is described in Table 2-3. Sensitivity is graded in terms of very high, high, medium and low.

Table 2-3 Criteria used for identifying Sensitivity of Landscape Character (adapted from GLVIA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Very High | ▪ Nationally significant landscape elements/characteristics  
▪ May be present within a landscape relevant designation and may contribute to the features that make the area ‘unique’ and/or ‘special’  
▪ Well-managed and maintained  
▪ May be subject to local recognition through designation  
▪ May have preserved cultural and historic associations and features  
▪ Impossible or difficult to replace and their loss would be detrimental to the landscape setting |
| High     | ▪ Important landscapes of particularly distinctive character  
▪ Likely to be subject to national or regional landscape relevant designations  
▪ Contains intact, consistent and well-defined features of high quality with a sense of place  
▪ Would be vulnerable to relatively minor changes. |
| Medium   | ▪ Moderately important landscapes  
▪ Often with regional or local landscape relevant designations  
▪ Reasonably tolerant of change. |
| Low      | ▪ Relatively unimportant landscapes  
▪ Rarely containing designations  
▪ Could be damaged or already heavily developed  
▪ Tolerant of substantial change. |
Visual Amenity Receptors and their Sensitivity

2.44 This includes a description and analysis of those visual amenity receptors, their views and their sensitivity to change which have a theoretical view to the application site within the study area.

2.45 The determination of sensitivity is dependent on the importance of the view, the value of the view and the nature of the viewer and is an expression as to whether the view can accommodate change in the form of the proposed Development. These are defined below:

- The importance of the view is determined by recognition, such as a national / recreational trail, tourist attraction, literary or artistic references visited or used by a large number of people
- The value of the view is determined by its ‘scenic’ or ‘aesthetic’ qualities. The value of the view will be increased if it lies within or overlooks a landscape relevant designated area or feature, which implies a greater ‘value’ to the landscape and therefore the view
- The nature of the viewer is the occupation or activity of the people who experience the view. Viewers whose activity is focussed on the natural beauty of the landscape, such as walkers and residents of properties that have constant views will often be of higher sensitivity than people who pass through the landscape in cars or trains, as their view is transient and moving.

2.46 The criteria I have used to describe sensitivity is described in Table 2-4. Sensitivity is graded in terms of high, medium and low.

Table 2-4 Criteria used for identifying Sensitivity of Visual Receptors (adapted from GLVIA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>Tourists/Visitors where the purpose of that visit is to experience and / or view nationally important national heritage assets and their settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tourists/Visitors of AONBs and National Parks where the purpose of that recreation is to experience and / or view that countryside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Residential properties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Users of public rights of way or other recreational trails e.g. national trails, footpaths, bridleways etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Users of recreational facilities where the purpose of that recreation is enjoyment of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the countryside e.g. country parks, National Trust or other access land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Outdoor workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Users of scenic roads, railways or waterways or users of designated tourist routes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Schools and other institutional buildings, and their outdoor areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Indoor workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Users of main roads e.g. trunk roads or passengers in public transport on main arterial routes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Users of recreational facilities where the purpose of that recreation is not related to the view e.g. sports facilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Magnitude of Change on the Site**

2.47 The magnitude of change on the site refers to the scale of change that would result from the construction, operation and de-commissioning of the proposed Development. The magnitude of change can be judged by the degree to which the landscape elements/characteristics of the site would be removed or altered by the proposed Development.

2.48 The criteria I have used for the magnitude of change is graded as major, moderate, minor, negligible and no change and is defined in Table 2-5.

Table 2-5 **Magnitude of Change on the Application Site (adapted from GLVIA)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td>Where the proposed Development would result in the complete removal or substantial alteration of a key landscape element or characteristic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Where the proposed Development would result in the removal of a notable part of an element or a notable alteration to a key landscape element or characteristic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>Where the proposed Development would result in the removal of a minor part of an element or a minor alteration to a key landscape element or characteristic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negligible</td>
<td>Where the proposed Development would result in the part removal of a minor element or the part alteration to a landscape element or characteristic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Change</td>
<td>Where the proposed Development would result in the part removal or removal of an element or part alteration to a landscape element</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Significance of Effect on the Application Site

2.49 The significance of effect is determined by balancing the sensitivity of the site against the magnitude of change. The interpretation of this balance determines whether the effect is significant or not significant. These are defined as follows:

- A significant effect will occur where the degree of removal or alteration of the sites landscape element/characteristics is such that the landscape is redefined. If the site is of high sensitivity, a significant effect can occur with a limited degree of removal or alteration.

- A not significant effect will occur where the degree of removal or alteration of the landscape element/characteristics will not redefine the site. It may be that the principle elements/characteristics of the site are replaceable or is of lower sensitivity, it may undergo a relatively high level of removal or alteration.

### Nature of the Effect on the Application Site

2.50 The nature of the effect on the site is based on the ability of its elements and characteristics to accommodate the proposed Development. The nature of effects are defined in terms of adverse or beneficial and is defined as follows:

- **Adverse effects** will occur through the removal or substantial alteration of the landscape elements/characteristics which will also potentially affect the key characteristics and pattern of the surrounding landscape.

- **Beneficial effects** will occur through enhancement of existing or introduction of new landscape elements/characteristics, for example through replanting a hedgerow so that it has better screening and/or biodiversity characteristics or promotes new features that are characteristic of the area. Beneficial effects could also involve the removal of ‘undesirable’ landscape elements.

### Magnitude of Change on the wider Landscape Character

2.51 The magnitude of change on landscape character areas, including landscape relevant designations, is the scale of the changes in the fabric, character, quality and value that
will result from the construction, operation and de-commissioning of the proposed Development.

2.52 The magnitude of change can be judged through interpretation of the following:

- The extent of the landscape character area or landscape relevant designation from which the proposed Development would be perceived
- The extent of the proposed Development that would be perceived in the landscape
- The scale and characteristics of the landscape, for example in a large-scale landscape with few scale indicators, the influence of the proposed Development may be reduced
- The extent to which the proposed Development will erode or remove the qualities for which the landscape is valued
- The distance between the landscape character area/landscape relevant designation and the proposed Development. Generally the greater the distance the lower the magnitude of change as the proposed Development will constitute a smaller, less apparent influence
- The appearance of the proposed Development in relation to its setting.

2.53 The criteria I have used for magnitude of change is graded in terms of major, moderate, Minor, negligible and no change and is defined in Table 2-6.
**Table 2.6  Magnitude of Change on the wider Landscape Character (adapted from GLVIA)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Major     | - Where the proposed Development will result in an immediately apparent change to the landscape character, arising from major alteration to the existing landscape character/landscape relevant designation  
            - The introduction of elements which are uncharacteristic of the existing landscape.                                                                                                           |
| Moderate  | - Where the proposed Development will result in a readily apparent change to the landscape character, arising from partial alteration to the existing landscape character / landscape relevant designation  
            - The introduction of elements that may be prominent but are not substantially uncharacteristic of the existing landscape.                                                                 |
| Minor     | - Where the proposed Development will result in an apparent but minor change to the landscape character, arising from a minor alteration to the existing landscape character/landscape relevant designation  
            - The introduction of elements that may be partially characteristic of the existing landscape.                                                                                               |
| Negligible| - Where the proposed Development will result in a barely perceptible change to the landscape character, arising from a very minor alteration to the characteristics of the existing landscape character/landscape relevant designation  
            - The introduction of elements which are characteristic of the existing landscape.                                                                                                          |
| No Change | - Where the proposed scheme may be visible but it is considered to fit the character area without causing change to it                                                                                   |

**Significance of Effect on the wider Landscape Character**

2.54 The significance of effect is determined by balancing the sensitivity of the landscape character area/landscape relevant designation against the magnitude of change. The
interpretation of this balance determines whether the effect is significant or not significant. These are defined as follows:

- A significant effect will occur where the proposed Development changes and redefines the special characteristics of the landscape
- A not significant effect will occur where the proposed Development may influence the landscape character but does not definitively change or redefine the special characteristics of the landscape.

**Nature of Effect on the wider Landscape Character**

2.55 The nature of the effect on landscape character areas/landscape relevant designations is based on the ability of the receptor to accommodate the proposed Development. The nature of the effect is defined in terms of adverse or beneficial and is defined as follows:

- **Adverse** effects will occur through the introduction of features that are at variance with the existing special characteristics and pattern of the landscape
- **Beneficial** effects will contribute to the existing landscape character/landscape relevant designations through the enhancement of desirable characteristics. Beneficial effects could also involve the removal of ‘undesirable’ landscape characteristics

**Magnitude of Change on Visual Amenity Receptors and their Views**

2.56 The magnitude of change on visual amenity receptors is the extent and scale of change upon available views and the effects of those changes on people and their views as a result of the construction, operation and de-commissioning of the proposed Development. The visibility and visual impacts of a development are affected by the distance from which it is viewed as well as other aspects such as weather conditions and siting. In addition it should be noted that visual impacts are not directly proportional to distance, as the nature of a view (e.g. framed/open view or back clothed/skyline view) and its context are as important as the size of a development within the view.
The magnitude of change can be judged through interpretation of the following:

- Extent or degree to which the proposed Development would occupy the view e.g. full view, partial view, glimpse or screened. This factor could also have seasonal variation due to the screening/filtering of views by vegetation in the summer;
- The loss or addition of elements in the view and the resulting contrast or integration in the view composition;
- The proportion of the proposed Development which is visible e.g. all of it, most of it, some or none of it;
- Distance between the receptor and the main part of the Scheme it would see e.g. is the Scheme the focus of the view e.g. it is visually prominent due to proximity or is it seen as one of a number of elements in a panoramic view;
- Type of view e.g. is it from a single viewpoint e.g. a property window or is it experienced from a number of consecutive viewpoints e.g. a footpath or outdoor location;
- The duration and nature of the effect.

The criteria I have used to describe the magnitude of visual change are identified in Table 2.7 and are based on GLVIA.

Table 2.7 Criteria used for identifying Magnitude of Visual Change (adapted from GLVIA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major</strong></td>
<td>Likely to be experienced in local or mid range open views.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative: Here the proposed scheme would cause short to long term / permanent or temporary change to the view composition as a result of loss of key elements which are integral to the view and or where contrasting new elements become the focus of the view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive: Here the proposed scheme would provide new elements which can be integrated into the view composition and contribute to the wider scale enhancement of the areas visual amenity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Moderate</strong></td>
<td>Likely to be experienced in mid range open views and local partial views and occasionally some long distance views.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative: Here the proposed scheme would cause short to long term permanent or temporary change in the view composition as a result of loss of some elements which contribute to the view and or where some contrasting new elements are seen as part of a number of elements in the view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Here the proposed scheme would provide new elements which can be integrated into the view composition and contribute to the wider scale enhancement of the areas visual amenity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>Likely to occur in long distance open views and local to mid range partial views. This change may also occur where a receptor is exposed to the proposed scheme as a result of a sequential series of local or mid range glimpses. Negative: Here the proposed scheme would cause short to long term permanent or temporary loss of some elements and or create contrasting new elements which are visible but has minimal change on the integrity of the view composition. Positive: Here the proposed scheme would be integrated and its new elements provide local scale enhancement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negligible</td>
<td>Likely to occur in elevated panoramic distant open views, mid range partial views or from a sequential series of near to mid range glimpses. Negative: Here the proposed scheme would create a contrasting new element which is visible but leaves the integrity of the view composition unaffected. Positive: Not used. It is unlikely this degree of positive change would be perceptible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Change</td>
<td>Where the proposed scheme may be visible but it is considered to fit the view composition without causing change to it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Significance of Effect on Visual Amenity Receptors and their Views**

2.59 Judgements on the significance of visual effects are arrived at by the identification of the relationship between the sensitivity of the visual receptor and the magnitude of visual change. This is represented in the matrix in Table 2-1.

2.60 It should be noted that the visual assessment has been undertaken as accurately as possible based on the walkover surveys.