

CLIFTON HAMPDEN ALLOTMENTS AND PADDOCK SITE DEVELOPMENTS

LANDSCAPE & VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

prepared for

Thomas Homes

by

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) has been commissioned by Thomas Homes to consider the landscape and visual effects of proposed development at Clifton Hampden, Oxfordshire, and to inform a planning submission to South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC), as the local planning authority.
- 1.2 Adams Habermehl (AH) is a landscape consultancy practice, registered with the Landscape Institute. The practice has significant experience of development related LVIA; broader environmental assessment studies, as well as baseline landscape assessments to interpret inherent landscape character and quality. AH have been providing landscape design as well as LVIA inputs, working within a multidisciplinary project team led by Woodfield Brady Architects (WBA).
- 1.3 There are two proposed development areas, identified as 'The Allotments Site' and, 'The Paddocks Site', located respectively to the north and south of the A415 Abingdon Road, as shown on Figure 1.
- 1.4 This LVIA is based on field work and desk study, with site and contextual field work carried out in June 2020. As a 'local' landscape practice, this appraisal also builds on AH's understanding of the sites' setting, based on knowledge of the area and past contextual LVIA studies.
- 1.5 LVIA is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right, and on public views and visual amenity.
- 1.6 The proposed development, landscape context and preliminary assessment findings have been submitted to SODC as part of a pre application submission. The consultation response has been used to inform the proposed design, reducing development extent and refining the development proposals.
- 1.7 The landscape context for the site and contextual photo locations are shown on Figures 1 and 2. The site context photographs are included within Appendix 1. The proposed development layout and associated landscape framework proposals are shown in the Landscape Masterplan (Appendix 2).

The assessment process

- 1.8 The LVIA technique adopted in this study is based upon current best practice 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment - Third Edition

(GLVIA)¹, whilst consideration of landscape character also draws upon current guidance².

- 1.9 The GLVIA identify that 'Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity'.

'The two components of LVIA are:

1. Assessment of landscape effects: assessing effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right;
2. Assessment of visual effects: assessing effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.'

- 1.10 This LVIA will therefore identify and evaluate development related changes to the site's landscape, as well as identifying visual receptors (people that have views of the development) and evaluating the change in visual amenity that results from the development. The methodology for the assessment is set out in Appendix 3 and summarised below.

Study Process and Methodology

- 1.11 Following briefing, the assessment process considered the local and wider landscape context from map and report-based data. Field survey and assessment of the site context has been carried out from June 2020 onwards, to identify site specific and contextual data alongside the effects of seasonal landscape change. Survey photographs (Figure 2 and Appendix 1) were taken to describe the site and inform the assessment process.
- 1.12 The study identifies the site's landscape and visual characteristics; its context, and; the scope and effects of the development, and considers the associated 'zone of visual influence' (ZVI). The ZVI is the area from which the proposals could be seen, and the receptors of those views are assessed for sensitivity based on activity, timescale etc. In line with GLVIA guidance, the visual receptors focus on public, rather than private or residential viewpoints. In identifying the effects of development on views, the quality of existing views to the site has been considered along with the site's dominance within a view; the site's relationship with other elements of the view; the visual quality of those other elements and; the change in the character of the view or components of the view.

¹ Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment- Third Edition. (The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, pub Routledge 2013 - ISBN 978-0-415-68004-2)

² An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, October 2014, Christine Tudor, Natural England and; Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland pub 2002, Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage.

- 1.13 The potential landscape and visual changes resulting from the proposals are recorded as impacts. Whilst these could be positive or negative, the text records resulting impacts as negative unless specifically stated otherwise. The assessment records these effects at year 1 of implementation, and at year 10 following early establishment of mitigation / enhancement measures where appropriate.
- 1.14 The assessment has also considered site-based landscape features and the part they play in creation of local landscape character, together with the likely change in those landscape features and landscape character that would result from the development proposals.
- 1.15 Following this introduction the main body of this assessment is divided into the following sections:
- Section 2 identifies the landscape and visual qualities of the site and surrounding area, including the site's context within established landscape studies.
 - Section 3 identifies the scope of development and associated landscape mitigation.
 - Section 4 assesses the landscape and visual effects of development.
 - Section 5 concludes and summarises the assessment findings.

2.0 THE SITES AND THEIR SETTING

- 2.1 This landscape appraisal has been prepared through site and desk study, with the desk study including the South Oxfordshire Landscape Character Assessment (SOLCA)³.
- 2.2 As set out in the SOLCA, the document *'should be used to understand the landscape make up of an area to give context to scheme proposals. The prevailing character of the landscape will help to shape the design and layout of development. With each landscape area described in this report there is a 'checklist' for managing and mitigating change to help guide the creation of neighbourhood development plans, development proposals and schemes and to provide assistance to decision makers.'* Response to applicable elements of the SOLCA checklist can therefore be used amongst criteria to test the application scheme.
- 2.3 The SOLCA identifies the sites, and much of Clifton Hampden, at the margins of the 'Nuneham Courtenay Ridge' landscape character type, and set above the 'River Thames Corridor' landscape character type. The sites are within the 'semi-enclosed farmed hills and valleys' landscape type.
- 2.4 The SOLCA is fairly broad grain but identifies the landscape type key characteristics. Elements considered applicable to Clifton Hampden are underlined for this study:
- *As above, (cross reference to SOLCA Open Farmed Hills & Valleys Key characteristics) though with a stronger structure of hedgerows and trees which provide clearer definition of field pattern.*
 - *Occurs mostly in association with settlements (e.g. Marsh Baldon), where a smaller-scale field pattern and the hedgerow structure remain more intact.*
 - *Predominantly intensive arable land use but some pockets of permanent pasture occur, particularly around settlements and on steeper hillsides.*
 - *Predominantly rural character. Note the SOLCA 'as above' cross reference to the Open farmed Hills & Valleys Key characteristics also includes Predominantly rural character but some localised intrusion of main roads, overhead power lines and built development.*

³ Landscape Character Assessment for the Local Plan 2033. Prepared by Lepus Consulting for SODC, November 2017

- Landform and landscape structure create enclosure and reduce intervisibility.

Landscape appraisal

- 2.5 The two sites are located at the western flank of Clifton Hampden, to north and south of the Abingdon Road. Clifton Hampden is a small village settlement washed over by Green Belt designation. Green Belt matters are described in the Green Belt Assessment as part of the Thomas Homes submission package. The village has a prevalence of 19th C or earlier traditional and estate cottage pattern dwellings, as well as larger houses set in mature gardens. A primary school, village hall and church are all set close to the village core. The greater part of the village, including the two proposed sites, fall within the Clifton Hampden Conservation Area.
- 2.6 There is a strong level of tree and hedge cover through the village, with mature trees in gardens, road edge and green-space areas and, within the river corridor. Roadside agricultural hedge-lines meet the village edge, and then frontage boundaries are predominantly hedge and timber-picket cottage style fencing, with a lesser proportion of stone or brick walling.
- 2.7 The village's wider context combines agricultural, wooded and riverine countryside, with elements of large scale-development and a strong highway pattern. The north of Clifton Hampden is framed by arable agriculture, tree-lined hedges and woodland. Mixed agriculture and housing form a broken development pattern along the A415 towards Burcot to the east. Local topography falls to the River Thames corridor with river, bridge and balance of meadows and strong tree groups to the south. To the west, the adjacent agricultural village setting is contained by hedge and tree lines, which progress to strong but incomplete patterns of roadside tree and hedge planting on the A415 and adjoining fields. This partial containment then gives way to large scale landscape and development at the Culham Science Centre, and wide 'Nuneham Courtenay Ridge' and Thames Valley views.
- 2.8 The village is bisected east - west by the A415 road and, north-south by the offset B4015 Oxford Road and, High Street, leading to the river crossing. This results in a heavy traffic presence through much of Clifton Hampden, dividing the village in spite of the broadly cohesive settlement character.
- 2.9 As shown on Figure 1, the Allotment Site is a rectangular area of approximately 3 Ha in two distinct halves, but contained within a shared landscape pattern. The northern half is actively farmed and functionally managed arable land, whilst the southern half comprises of largely redundant and unmanaged allotment land with limited active allotments, as well as the village hall and associated car park.
- 2.10 Historic OS mapping suggest this site was in normal agricultural use with the 'Reading Room' (village Hall) included at the turn of the 19thC. The allotments themselves do not appear to have been included in mapping and are assumed to be a 20thC development.

- 2.11 The Allotment Site is contained by tall garden hedgerow boundaries to housing on Watery Lane to the east; a strong tree belt to the north; a tall double hedge line and trees to the west and; a strong roadside hedge to the Abingdon Road southern boundary. The arable and allotment areas are loosely separated by an open line of semi-mature walnut trees, with occasional semi-mature or scrubby trees elsewhere through the allotments.
- 2.12 The landscape components of the site are typical village edge elements and not unusual in context. The redundant allotment land, scrubby tree cover and open car park are of low landscape value, the arable land is relatively neutral, whilst the strong containing boundary vegetation contributes to a locally important structural landscape pattern.
- 2.13 There are public footpath routes within the site's eastern and northern boundaries with open views over the site. There is a further footpath set between the two tall agricultural hedge-lines at the site's western boundary and thus screened from the site except at a mid-point hedgerow agricultural access gap. The site is significantly screened from the eastern Watery Lane housing by tall garden boundary hedge lines, whilst a lower hedge section and tree groups effectively frame views to and from the three-storey listed 'Courtiers' house. The eastern garden hedges include strong evergreen cover whilst the northern and western tree and hedge-lines are tall but deciduous agricultural pattern.
- 2.14 The Allotment Site is largely screened from eastbound Abingdon Road traffic by tall deciduous hedge cover, but stationary or westbound viewers have gap views across the village hall car park. The Abingdon Road footway / cycle-path provides similar viewpoints to other road users, whilst housing to the south of the Abingdon Road is substantially screened by boundary fence, hedge and tree-lines.
- 2.15 The Paddocks Site is an irregularly shaped pasture field of around 1.5Ha. Historic OS plans show the land as orchard to Upper Town Farm in the late 19th C, but without categorisation (presumed declining orchard and transition to standard pasture) in the 20th C. The site area and overall boundaries appear unchanged since the 19th C. The Paddocks Site is currently used as horse pasture and includes associated temporary stables buildings.
- 2.16 The northern Abingdon Road boundary comprises a dense agricultural hedge-line, with a field gate access. The centre half of the hedge boundary is backed with a secondary tree line, producing a strong combined boundary screen. The north-west boundary limit adjoins a telephone exchange building with an associated hedge break to the road, and associated minor glimpsed road or pavement views into the site.
- 2.17 The southern (SW to SE) boundary is stepped around adjoining garden and property boundaries as per the historic OS layout, with an old barn boundary wall and, mature and outgrown boundary hedge vegetation reflecting the unchanged settlement pattern. This stepped boundary provides a strongly screened site edge, whilst dwellings to the south are generally set down the 'river cliff' slope and at a lower level, facing the Thames corridor.

- 2.18 The eastern site boundary includes a narrow public footpath corridor between a damaged picket style fence and scrubby vegetation to the paddock edge, and a garden boundary of tall close-board fence and tall hedge to the adjoining dwelling. The footpath users' relatively open view across the paddock are lost as the path turns along the south-east paddock edge and down the river cliff slope.
- 2.19 The interior of the paddock is grassland as grazing pasture and with a number of young-mature parkland style trees in individual metal tree guards. The pasture is subdivided into grazing areas with electric tape fencing, as is commonplace with horse pasture.
- 2.20 The landscape components of the Paddocks Site, including strong boundary hedge and tree cover, parkland trees and open grassland are appropriate to context and provide positive elements within the village edge landscape structure, but are not uncommon in this setting. The site interior is largely screened, but with the northern boundary contributing to roadside views. Whilst the site's footpath corridor and boundaries are constrained and visually poor, wider views across the site are positive but unexceptional, representing a balance of village edge components.

3.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The development proposals are included within the Landscape Framework Plan at Appendix 1, but reference should be made to the full design proposals by Woodfield Brady Architects. The design proposals have been developed in consultation and partnership with the local community and following pre-application study feedback by SODC. Scheme iterations have sought to maximise community and development benefits, whilst minimising impacts.

Allotments Site

- 3.2 In summary, the Allotments Site proposes built development, amenity open space and replacement allotments at the south of the site (the redundant allotments and village hall area), with open space and habitat uses at the northern (current arable) area.
- 3.3 The southern, built development elements, include revised highway access with hedge re-planting and reinforcement works to achieve sight-lines; a GP medical surgery with primary and overflow car parking; fourteen proposed dwellings with street and private garden space; a minor extension to the existing village hall; 'village green' and 'public square' public open space and; strong structural tree and hedge planting measures for landscape reinforcement and visual screening. The northern site area is sown as wildflower grassland with coppice and tree planting to the site corners. A mown perimeter path provides an amenity route and connects to the established perimeter public footpaths.

Paddocks Site

- 3.4 The Paddock Site includes an access road, limited new housing, a burial ground, amenity open space, new paths and, landscape measures. The built development forms a farmstead style building cluster of three dwellings, with new highway access drive. Gardens are set against the visually closed south-western residential boundaries and are screened at their outer edges.
- 3.5 The burial ground includes low-key car parking, an entrance lych gate, circulation path and, framing fencing and planting measures. The layout retains open wildflower grassland, parkland trees and a new community orchard to the eastern site aspects, with hedging new large growing trees and low-key parkland rail to the drive edge. The eastern footpath corridor has the poor boundary fencing removed and new connecting path links set through the open space, providing an improved aspect into the site. The Abingdon Road access will require work to accommodate sight lines, with additional hedge and tree planting proposed to maintain a strong landscape boundary.

4.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT

Landscape effects

4.1 The main landscape effects of development would be:

The Allotments Site:

- Increase in built development and reduction in open landscape areas;
- Loss of derelict allotments and re-provision of a similar area of new allotments;
- Some hedge removal and strong landscape replanting works to accommodate a new Abingdon Road access;
- Loss of arable land, but new woodland, biodiverse grassland and amenity access land.

4.2 The existing Allotments Site landscape components are considered to have a low to moderate local value, contributing to village edge landscape structure. The proposals will result in an early loss of landscape elements, but with new layout and planting establishing over an assumed 10 year period to provide a landscape setting of equal value. This equates to minor to low-moderate local landscape impact at year 1, reducing to low minor to neutral landscape impact at year 10 and ongoing landscape enhancement with continued establishment over time.

4.3 The Paddocks Site:

- Increase in built development for the housing and highway areas, a change in landscape character and function for the burial site. There will be a reduction in open landscape pasture areas, but with additional tree and hedge planting associated with the dwellings and burial ground;
- Strong new planting of orchard, coppice woodland blocks, hedge and tree planting;
- Access to open wildflower grassland from the existing footpath and through new connecting footpaths;
- Some hedge removal and strong landscape replanting works to accommodate a new Abingdon Road access;
- Landscape management opportunities to promote and maintain landscape value over time.

- 4.4 The existing Paddocks Site landscape components are considered to have a moderate local value, contributing to village edge landscape structure. The proposals will result in a reduction of open landscape and an early loss of some landscape elements, but with new access and planting establishing over an assumed 10-year period to provide a positive range of landscape elements within a reduced area. This is assessed to equate to low-moderate to moderate local landscape impact at year 1, reducing to minor local landscape impact at year 10 and ongoing landscape enhancement with continued landscape establishment over time.

Visual effects

The Allotments Site

- 4.5 The LVIA process mainly considers public viewpoints and the proposed redevelopment measures will result in clear change to views from the eastern and northern site boundary footpaths, with hedge-gap view changes from the western site footpath. The footpath views will be to new buildings and other built infrastructure, as well as clear change in the open space uses.
- 4.6 There will be changes to public site views from the A415 road and footpath immediately adjacent to the site, and to views from the east extending to the centre of the village at the High St / Abingdon Road junction. Views from the east would be likely to include the proposed surgery building. Views from the south are likely to be more open, with views to the new dwellings along the access road and through any early sight-line hedge loss prior to establishment of new hedge and boundary screen planting.
- 4.7 Assuming winter trimming of the wider A415 roadside hedges, there are likely to be filtered winter views to the first floors and rooflines of site buildings from a minor crest on the A415, some 150m west of the site boundary. However, the established and retained western site boundary vegetation, other local topography and wider landscape screening of tree and hedge cover is expected to screen summer views and wider general approach views from the A415 or other locations to the west.
- 4.8 Views to the proposed Allotment Site development will be in the context of the existing settlement and adjacent buildings which form part of the continuum of receptors' views from the road or footpaths, and diminishing the impact magnitude of change. Recreational path users are considered to have medium sensitivity whilst motorists will have low sensitivity to change. Notwithstanding the current neglected site character, for year 1, this is assessed to result in a low-moderate local visual impact on footpath users and, minor to low-moderate visual impact on road users. By year 10, screen planting and an intended positive landscape setting will have established, resulting in a minor impact on pedestrians and negligible to low-minor impact on motorists, over current baseline conditions.

The Paddocks Site

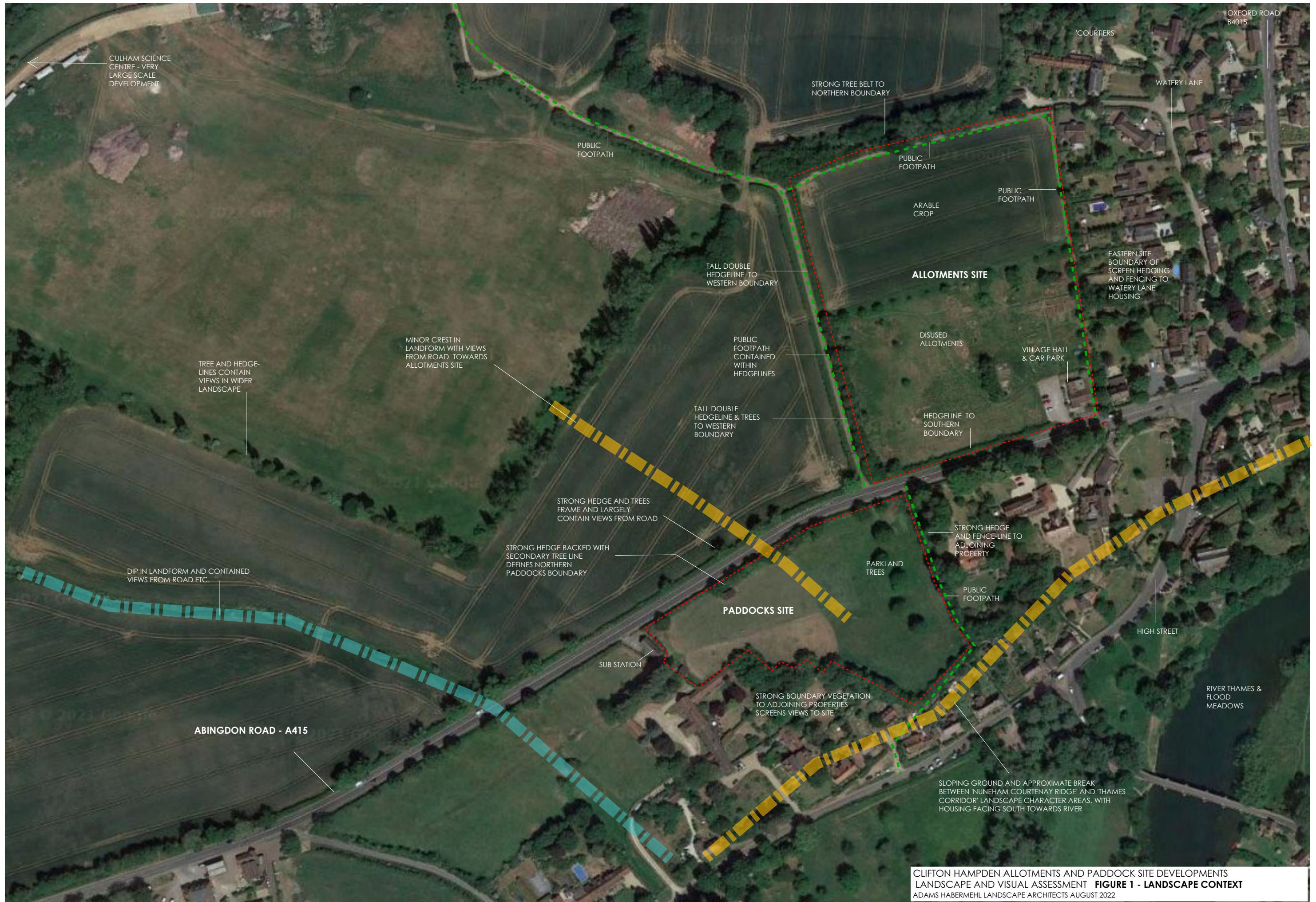
- 4.9 The proposed built development is set to the south of the Paddocks Site, away from A415 view-points. There will be A415 views to the changed road frontage, with access point end hedge works for sight lines. There will also be limited views along the site access drive to the proposed buildings. The eastern boundary footpath will have views across the paddock to the new development as a farmstead building group, broadly reflecting a pattern of traditional buildings in the village. The road and burial ground will also form part of the revised footpath view. Meanwhile, the proposed community orchard will increase the level of tree screening between the footpath and site development, whilst those development uses will also integrate over time.
- 4.10 Allowing for the development and preliminary landscape measures shown (Appendix 2), the Paddocks development is expected to result in a year 1 minor / low moderate local impact for footpath users and negligible / minor local impact for motorists. By year 10, this is expected to change to a minor local visual impact for pedestrians and negligible visual impact for motorists.
- 4.11 For both the Allotments Site and the Paddocks Site, it can be expected that ongoing landscape establishment will continue to improve the accommodation of development and enhancement of the visual context, with recorded visual impacts diminishing and visual character further improving over time.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

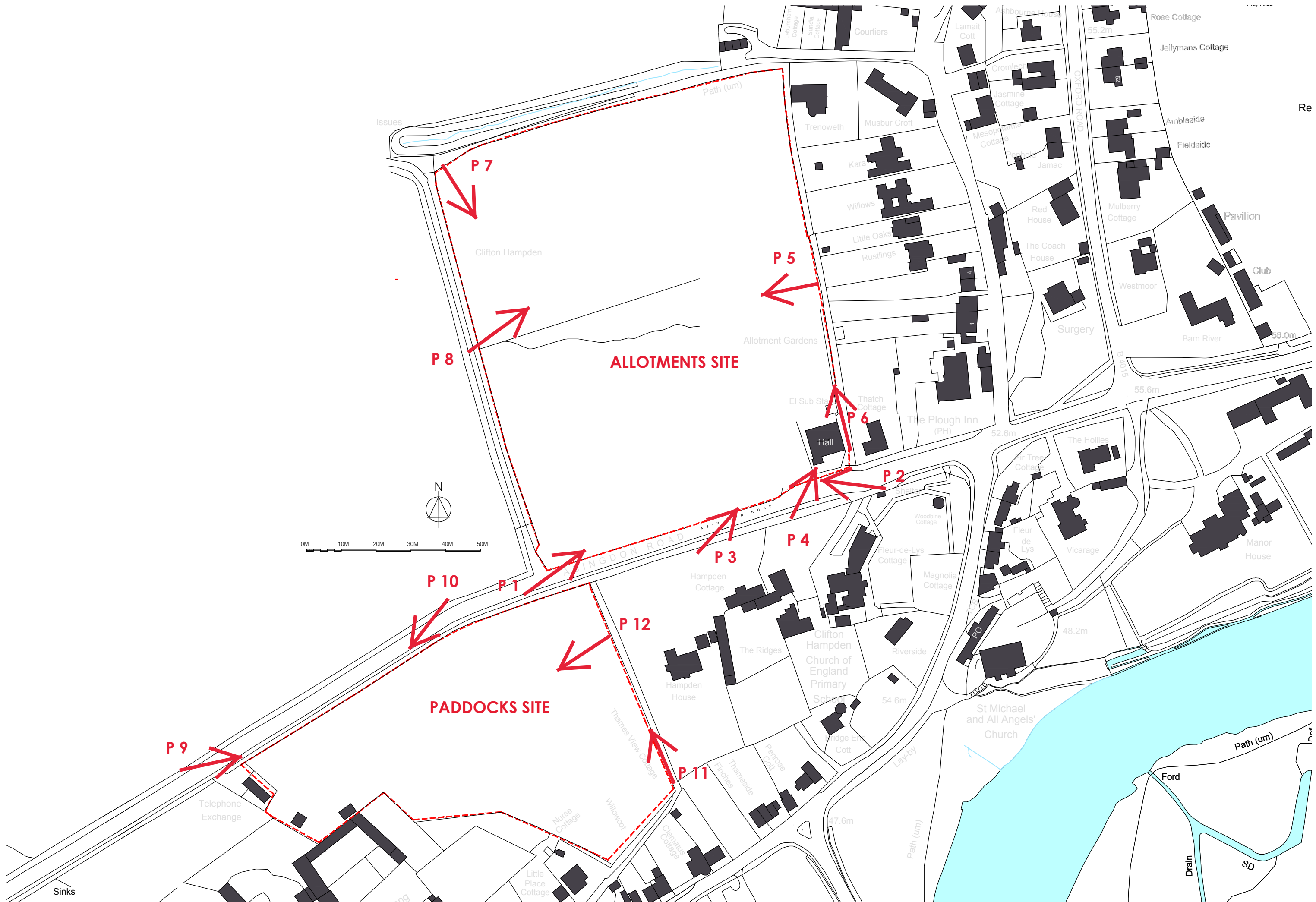
- 5.1 The Clifton Hampden Allotments Site and Paddocks Site development proposals have been assessed for landscape and visual effects through desk and field-based assessment processes.
- 5.2 The built development is set out in Woodfield Brady Architects' proposals with landscape measures by Adams Habermehl landscape architects. The primary built development proposals have been established in partnership with the community and following pre-application planning feedback, to balance benefits and mitigate potential impacts. The framework level landscape proposals seek to provide further benefit and mitigative measures.
- 5.3 The proposed built development and associated landscape measures are assessed to result in short-term minor to low-moderate local landscape impacts at year 1, reducing to neutral-to-minor landscape impacts by year 10. This will be followed by further impact diminution / enhancement with ongoing landscape establishment over time. Similarly, visual impacts are assessed to range from negligible to low-moderate impacts at year 1, through to negligible to minor visual impacts at year 10. These measurements are set over current baseline conditions, and further enhancement would be expected with ongoing landscape establishment after year 10.
- 5.4 Based on submitted materials and normal design development processes, it is assessed that that the Allotments and Paddocks Site proposals will lead to satisfactory landscape and visual outcomes without unacceptable impacts. Further requirements to safeguard landscape and visual matters can be adequately conditioned and should not be a constraint to progression of the project through to planning approval.

FIGURE 1 LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

FIGURE 2 PHOTOGRAPH LOCATION PLAN



CLIFTON HAMPDEN ALLOTMENTS AND PADDOCK SITE DEVELOPMENTS
 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT **FIGURE 1 - LANDSCAPE CONTEXT**
 ADAMS HABERMEHL LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS AUGUST 2022



CLIFTON HAMPDEN LVIA FIGURE 2 PHOTO LOCATIONS



Photo 1 Allotment site from west, with strong summer screening to south-west corner



Photo 2 Existing view into Allotment site from east. Early views to surgery development in context of existing village hall, with extended boundary landscape providing enhanced screening in mid-term.



Photo 3 Foreground hedge retained and reinforced to screen surgery building



Photo 4 Existing village hall and village edge development transition



Photo 5 Existing allotments from eastern boundary public footpath, with tree line beyond to be retained



Photo 6 eastern public footpath corridor with boundary and local setting to be retained largely as existing



Photo 7 Footpath view along strong western boundary tree and hedge-line Allotment site from west. Filtered views to existing village housing, with future clear views to new housing.



Photo 8 View from western footpath to Courtiers house and other dwellings on Watery Lane. Site frontage to be enhanced through transition to wildflower grassland, additional tree planting and new access paths.



Photo 9 Paddocks site from west, with telephone exchange building providing development outlier at the edge of the village.



Photo 10 Paddocks site northern boundary with hedge to be cut back and interplanted to provide new site access road and accommodate sight lines.

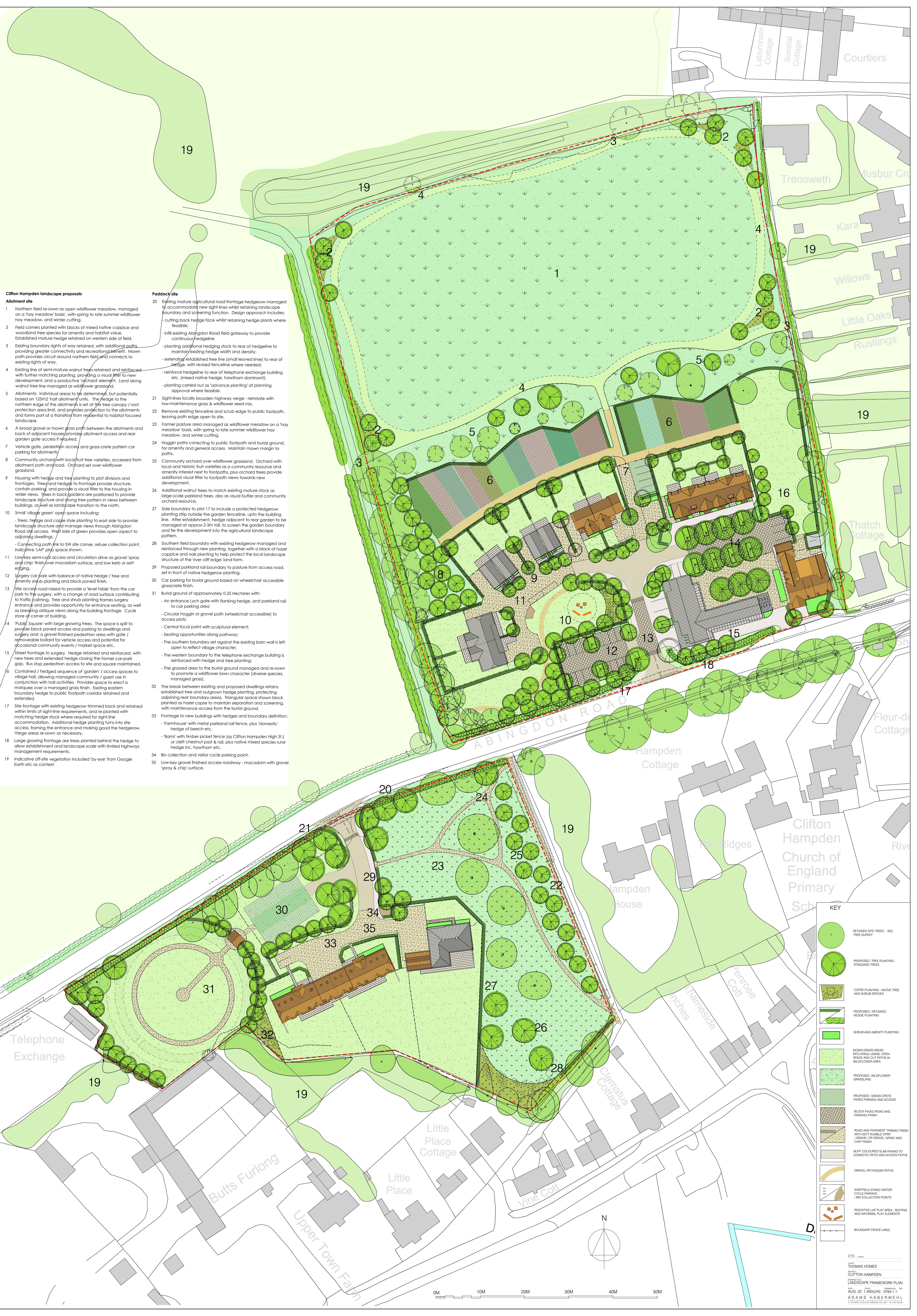


Photo 11 Paddocks site eastern boundary public footpath corridor. Fencing and path edge scrub to be removed and path opened to site.



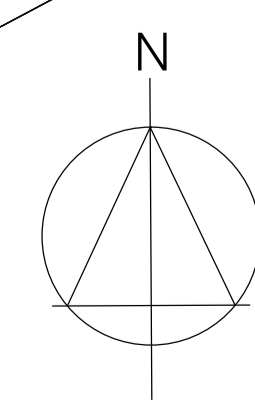
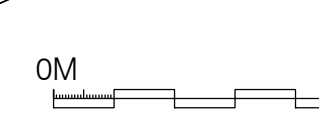
Photo 12 Paddocks site from eastern boundary footpath. Proposed orchard planting will partially filter views to proposed development.

- Clifton Hampden landscape proposals**
- Allotment site**
- Northern field re-sown as open wildflower meadow, managed on a 'hay meadow' basis, with spring to late summer wildflower hay meadow, and winter cutting.
 - Field corners planted with blocks of mixed native coppice and woodland tree species for amenity and habitat value. Established mature hedge retained on western side of field.
 - Existing boundary rights of way retained, with additional paths providing greater connectivity and recreational benefit. Mown path provides circuit around northern field and connects to existing rights of way.
 - Existing line of semi-mature walnut trees retained and reinforced with further matching planting, providing a visual screen to new development, and a productive 'orchard' element. Land along walnut tree line managed as wildflower grassland.
 - Allotments: Individual areas to be determined, but potentially based on 125m² (half allotment) units. The hedge to the northern edge of the allotments is set at 1.6m free canopy / root protection area limit and provides protection to the allotments and forms part of a transition from residential to habitat focused landscape.
 - A broad gravel or mown grass path between the allotments and back of adjacent houses provides allotment access and rear garden gate access if required.
 - Vehicle gate, pedestrian access and grass-crete pattern car parking for allotments.
 - Community orchard with local fruit varieties, accessed from allotment path and road. Orchard set over wildflower grassland.
 - Housing with hedge and tree planting to plot divisions and frontages. Trees and hedges to frontage provide structure, contain parking, and provide a visual filter to the housing in wider views. Trees in back gardens are positioned to provide landscape structure and strong tree pattern in views between buildings, as well as landscape transition to the north.
 - Small 'village green' open space including:
 - Trees, hedge and coppice style planting to east side to provide landscape structure and manage views through Abingdon Road site access. West side of green provides open aspect to adjoining dwellings.
 - Connecting path link to SW site corner, refuse collection point, indicative 'LAP' play space shown.
 - Low-key semi-rural access and circulation drive as gravel 'spray and chip' finish over macadam surface, and low kerb or set-off edging.
 - Surgery car park with balance of native hedge / tree and amenity shrub planting and block paved finish.
 - Site access road raised to provide a level table from the car park to the surgery, with a change of road surface contributing to traffic calming. Tree and shrub planting frames surgery entrance and provides opportunity for entrance seating, as well as breaking oblique views along the building frontage. Cycle store of corner of building.
 - 'Public Square' with large growing trees. The space is split to provide block paved access and parking to dwellings and surgery and a gravel finished pedestrian area with gate / removable bollard for vehicle access and potential for occasional community events / market space etc.
 - Street frontage to surgery. Hedge retained and reinforced, with new trees and extended hedge closing the former car-park gap. Bus stop pedestrian access to site and square maintained.
 - Contained / hedged sequence of 'garden' / access spaces to village hall, allowing managed community / guest use in conjunction with hall activities. Provides space to erect a marquee over a managed grass finish. Existing eastern boundary hedge to public footpath corridor retained and extended.
 - Site frontage with existing hedgerow trimmed back and retained within limits of sight-line requirements, and re-planted with matching hedge stock where required for sight-line accommodation. Additional hedge planting turns into site access, framing the entrance and making good the hedgerow. Verge areas re-sown as necessary.
 - Large growing frontage are trees planted behind the hedge to allow establishment and landscape scale with limited highways management requirements.
 - Indicative off-site vegetation included 'by eye' from Google Earth etc as context.
- Paddock site**
- Existing mature agricultural road frontage hedgerow managed to accommodate new sight-lines whilst retaining landscape boundary and screening function. Design approach includes:
 - cutting back hedge face whilst retaining hedge plants where feasible;
 - infill existing Abingdon Road field gateway to provide continuous hedgerow
 - planting additional hedging stock to rear of hedgerow to maintain existing hedge width and density;
 - extending established tree line (small leaved line) to rear of hedge, with revised fence line where needed;
 - reinforce hedgerow to rear of telephone exchange building etc. (mixed native hedge, hawthorn dominant);
 - planting carried out as 'advance planting' at planning approval where feasible.
 - Sight-lines locally broaden highway verge - reinstate with low-maintenance grass & wildflower seed mix.
 - Remove existing fence line and scrub edge to public footpath, leaving path edge open to site.
 - Former pasture area managed as wildflower meadow on a 'hay meadow' basis, with spring to late summer wildflower hay meadow, and winter cutting.
 - Hoggin paths connecting to public footpath and burial ground, for amenity and general access. Maintain mown margin to paths.
 - Community orchard over wildflower grassland. Orchard with local and historic fruit varieties as a community resource and amenity interest next to footpaths, plus orchard trees provide additional visual filter to footpath views towards new development.
 - Additional walnut trees to match existing mature stock as large-scale parkland trees, also as visual buffer and community orchard resource.
 - Side boundary to plot 17 to include a protected hedgerow planting strip outside the garden fence line, up to the building line. After establishment, hedge adjacent to rear garden to be managed of approx 2.3m tall, to screen the garden boundary and tie the development into the agricultural landscape pattern.
 - Southern field boundary with existing hedgerow managed and reinforced through new planting, together with a block of hazel coppice and oak planting to help protect the local landscape structure of the 'river cliff edge' land farm.
 - Proposed parkland rail boundary to pasture from access road, set in front of native hedgerow planting.
 - Car parking for burial ground based on wheelchair accessible grasscrete finish.
 - Burial ground of approximately 0.25 Hectares with:
 - An entrance Lych gate with flanking hedge, and parkland rail to car parking area
 - Circular hoggin or gravel path (wheelchair accessible) to access plots;
 - Central focal point with sculptural element;
 - Seating opportunities along pathway;
 - The southern boundary set against the existing barn wall is left open to reflect village character;
 - the western boundary to the telephone exchange building is reinforced with hedge and tree planting;
 - the grassed area to the burial ground managed and re-sown to promote a wildflower lawn character (diverse species, managed grass).
 - The break between existing and proposed dwellings retains established tree and outgrown hedge planting, protecting adjoining rear boundary areas. Triangular space shown block planted as hazel coppice to maintain separation and screening, with maintenance access from the burial ground.
 - Frontage to new buildings with hedges and boundary definition:
 - 'Farmhouse' with metal parkland rail fence, plus 'domestic' hedge of beech etc.
 - 'Barns' with timber picket fence (as Clifton Hampden High St.) or cleft chestnut post & rail, plus native mixed species rural hedge inc. hawthorn etc.
 - Bin collection and visitor cycle parking point.
 - Low-key gravel finished access roadway - macadam with gravel 'spray & chip' surface.



KEY

- RETAINED SITE TREES - SEE TREE SURVEY
- PROPOSED TREE PLANTING - STANDARD TREES
- COPSE PLANTING - NATIVE TREE AND SHRUB SPECIES
- PROPOSED / RETAINED HEDGE PLANTING
- SHRUB AND AMENITY PLANTING
- MOWN GRASS AREAS INCLUDING LAWN, OPEN SPACE AND CUT PATHS IN WILDFLOWER AREA
- PROPOSED WILDFLOWER GRASSLAND
- PROPOSED GRASS-CRETE PAVED PARKING AND ACCESS
- BLOCK PAVED ROAD AND PARKING FINISH
- ROAD AND PAVEMENT TARMAC FINISH WITH SETT FRAME, STRIP / GRVEL OR GRAVEL SPRAY AND CHIP FINISH
- BUFF COLOURED SLAB PAVING TO DOMESTIC PATIO AND ACCESS PATHS
- GRAVEL OR HOGGIN PATHS
- SHREDFIELD STAND VISITOR CYCLE PARKING / BIN COLLECTION POINTS
- INDICATIVE LAP PLAY AREA - SEATING AND INFORMAL PLAY ELEMENTS
- BOUNDARY FENCE LINES



APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

- 1 The assessment technique adopted draws upon the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Third Edition' prepared by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment⁴, providing 'best practice' methodology.

The assessment approach

- 2 The approach may be summarised in the following key stages:
 - Definition of the study area.
 - Baseline assessment. The assessment of the existing landscape and visual resource within the study area and identification of landscape character types.
 - Identification of the development proposals and identification of key sources of likely impacts.
 - Description of mitigation proposals.
 - Identification and assessment of the impact the proposed development will have on the existing landscape resource.
 - Definition of the visual envelope. Identification and assessment of the impacts the proposed development will have on the visual receptors and visual amenity within the visual envelope.
 - Summary of effects.

Methodology

- 3 Both landscape and visual impacts are assessed for the development proposals. Potential impacts are considered, in year 1 on immediate completion of works and; at year 10 from completion, allowing for the establishment of landscape mitigation / accommodation measures.

Landscape Impacts

- 4 Landscape impacts result from changes to actual components of the landscape and/or the character or quality of the landscape. Therefore, the landscape impacts are predicted on the basis of the order of change to baseline conditions prevalent at the time of the assessment. The assessment considers impact upon individual landscape features and secondly, considers impact upon landscape character. As a register of change, impacts can be recorded as either positive or negative changes to the landscape.
- 5 The landscape impacts identified are broadly assessed in terms of Substantial, Moderate, Minor or, Negligible. Moderate and Substantial impacts are considered to be in need of appropriate mitigation.
 - **Substantial** impacts may be defined as loss, damage or change of a high or medium magnitude to largely unspoilt or highly sensitive landscape resources.

⁴ Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment- Third Edition. (The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, pub Routledge 2013 - ISBN 978-0-415-68004-2

- **Moderate** impacts may be defined as loss, damage or change of a medium magnitude to landscape resources of medium sensitivity or quality.
- **Minor** impacts may be defined as loss, damage or change of a low magnitude to landscape resources of medium or low sensitivity or quality.
- **Negligible** impacts may be defined as loss, damage or change of a very low magnitude to landscape resources of low sensitivity or quality.

6 The criteria used to define the magnitude of change include:

- character and quality of existing landscape and determinants of that character including topography, development pattern, land use management, cultural associations etc.;
- key features of the existing landscape;
- the nature of predicted impacts including the duration of the change; the spatial extent of change, permanence or reversibility and; whether the impact is of a direct, indirect or secondary nature;
- degree of change to key features;
- the ability of the landscape to accommodate change; and
- the significance of change within a local, regional and national context.

Landscape Character

7 Landscape character is determined by a distinct pattern or combination of elements that occur in the landscape. The overall landscape character may result from a combination of 'character areas', which are geographic areas with a distinctive character.

8 Unless caused by 'off site' works, direct landscape impacts will be limited to the site itself. However, changes to landscape character may extend beyond the site if changes to the site landscape can be seen to alter the character of a wider area.

Visual Impacts

9 Visual impacts result from changes to the appearance of the landscape as a result of the development proposals either intruding into, or obstructing existing views, or by their overall impact on visual amenity. The degree of visual impact depends not only on the degree of change brought about by the development but also the sensitivity of the receptors to visual change.

10 The criteria used to assess the degree of visual impact are as follows:

- value of existing views;
- the degree of change to existing views;
- the availability and amenity value of alternative views;
- sensitivity of the receptor;
- activity of the receptor;
- the extent of visibility of the visual change and distance from the receptor;
- the period of time for which the view is changed and the period for which the receptor is exposed to the change;
- seasonal changes to screening vegetation.

- 11 Receptors vary in their degree of sensitivity to change depending on such factors as proximity, activity and period of time exposed to the change. For example, recreational amenity views from footpaths and other public spaces, or the permanent views of residents, would be considered more sensitive than the transient views of motorists or temporary views of nearby workers. Within residential views, ground floor (main living room) views are assessed as more important than first floor views. Seasonal changes in vegetation cover can reduce or increase screening effects and are taken into account in assessing impacts on views.
- 12 Visual impacts are broadly assessed as Substantial, Moderate, Minor or Negligible. Moderate and substantial impacts are considered to be in need of appropriate mitigation.
- **Substantial** impacts may be defined as highly sensitive receptors exposed to intrusion, obstruction or change of a high or medium magnitude for prolonged periods.
 - **Moderate** impacts may be defined as the result of moderately sensitive receptors exposed to intrusion, obstruction or change of a medium magnitude.
 - **Minor** impacts may be defined as the result of receptors of low sensitivity exposed to intrusion, obstruction or change of a low magnitude for short periods of time.
 - **Negligible** impacts may be defined as the result of receptors of low sensitivity exposed to very limited intrusion, obstruction or change of a low magnitude for short periods of time, such that there is apparent change, but minimal 'harm' results from that change.
- 13 Significance thresholds (Substantial, Moderate, Minor or Negligible) can be determined for landscape or visual impacts from different combinations of sensitivity and magnitude to effect corresponding variation on the examples given. Where appropriate, the threshold descriptions have been combined e.g. 'Moderate - Substantial' to give greater precision to description of impacts. Impacts may be adjusted up or down according to specific overriding factors and will be noted in the text and will be defined as 'negligible' or 'none' where there is very limited or no change as a result of the proposals.
- 14 The significance of visual impacts must take into account the nature of the existing view. For example, an existing view may be dominated by industrial buildings, or by an attractive area of woodland and, by comparison, the overall visual impact of proposed development might be positive or negative. The amenity value of alternative views will also be taken into account. The following table shows the how the relationship of the impact magnitude (degree of change of the view) combined with the sensitivity of the receptor, can be used to determine the impact significance (significance of the change).
- 15 Table 1 Matrix of impact magnitude and sensitivity of receptor to determine impact significance.

IMPACT MAGNITUDE	IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE: EFFECTS OF PROPOSALS		
SUBSTANTIAL	Moderate	Moderate / Substantial	Substantial
MEDIUM	Minor / Moderate	Moderate	Moderate / Substantial
MINOR	Minor	Minor / Moderate	Moderate
NEGLIGIBLE	Negligible / Minor	Minor	Minor / Moderate
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
	RECEPTOR SENSITIVITY		

Table 1 matrix