

Temple Dinsley
School Lane
Preston
Hertfordshire
SG4 7RT

Landscape and Visual Appraisal



15 November 2024

Landscape
Institute
Registered
Practice

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Report Number	Revision	Date Issued	Recipient
200-01-R1	-	18/11/24	SCABAL

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Temple Dinsley School Lane

Preston Hertfordshire SG4 7RT

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

1 Introduction

This report presents the findings of a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) undertaken to accompany applications for Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for a proposed development at the above site (hereafter referred to as the 'Site').

The LVA was commissioned by Studio Cullinan And Buck Architects Ltd (SCABAL), on behalf of the landowner of the site, Mr Russell Prince of The Door PHC Ltd, and was undertaken by DRaW UK Ltd (DRaW) a Registered Practice of the Landscape Institute, in November 2024.

1.1 The Site

Temple Dinsley is situated on the east side of the village of Preston, approximately 5km south of Hitchin's centre, at the northeast end of the Chiltern Hills. The Site, covering approximately 27.8 hectares, is bordered by lanes to the east, south, and west. School Lane, Preston's main village street, marks the western boundary. To the north, the boundary is defined by agricultural land. The terrain gently undulates, rising northwest of the house, with a distinct valley extending northeast from the north side of the gardens, offering distant views of Letchworth.

The site address is:

Temple Dinsley
School Lane
Preston
Hertfordshire
SG4 7RT

The main access to the Site is off School Lane, Preston.

Figure 1 below shows the Site location.

Figure 2 below shows the approximate application boundary and the Site context.

Figure 1: Site Location Plan

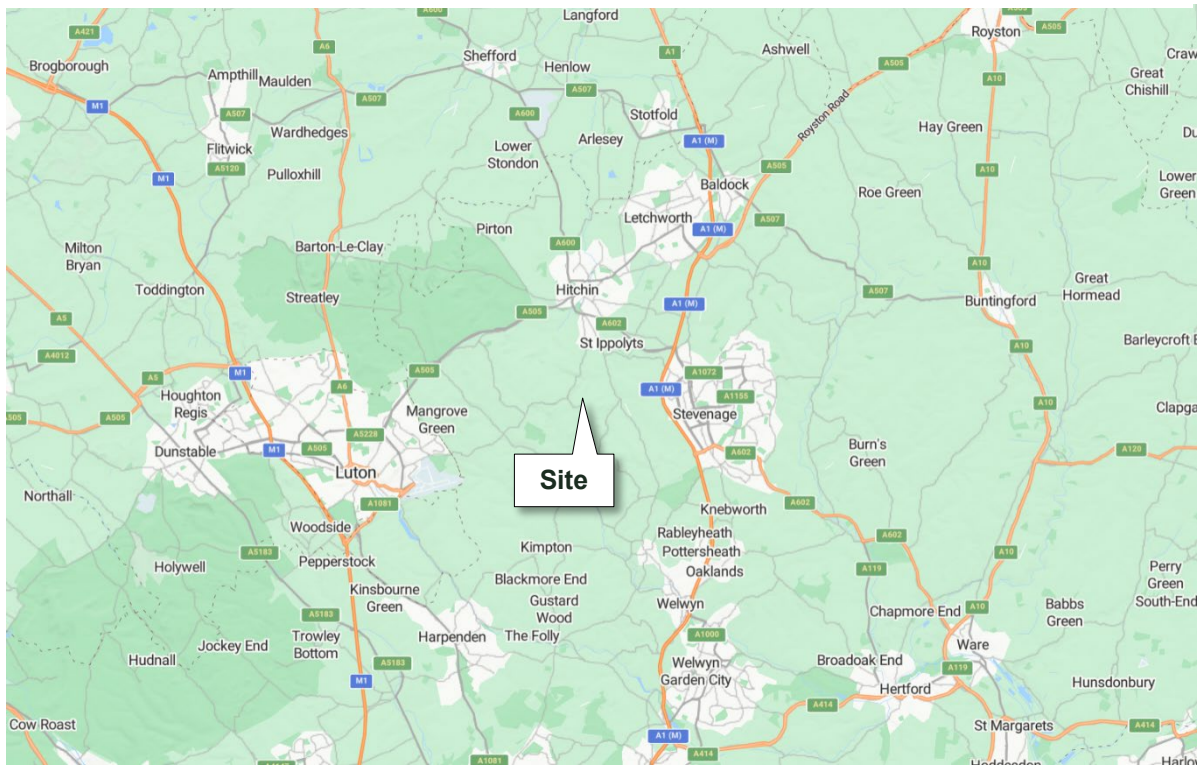


Figure 2: Approximate Application Boundary and Site Context



1.2 Scope of Appraisal

This appraisal aims to build upon but not replicate the 'Initial Landscape Appraisal' (ILA) and complement the Heritage Statement. It should be read in conjunction with these documents.

The appraisal comprises:

- A description of the existing landscape baseline conditions and potential landscape receptors;
- Descriptions of existing visual baseline conditions and potential visual receptors from representative viewpoints; and
- A qualitative appraisal of the potential landscape and visual effects resulting from the proposed development.

1.3 Appraisal Methodology

The appraisal accords with the current best practice guidance, written specifically for Landscape and Visual Assessment, namely: '*Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*', (GLVIA) produced by the Landscape Institute with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (Third Edition, 2013).

The assessment is considered in two separate but inter-linked parts, as follows:

Landscape Effects relating to changes in the fabric, character and quality of the landscape. These include direct impacts on features such as vegetation cover, as well as indirect effects on the host landscape, taking into account designations and land-use.

Visual Effects relating to specific changes in views and the effects of those changes on visual receptors (e.g. residents, users of public rights of way or recreational facilities). Effects on views from publicly accessible heritage assets, particularly those that are popular visitor attractions are also considered, although the effects on the setting of historical assets is outside the scope of this report. It should be noted that as this LVA builds upon the previously submitted ILA, some non-publicly accessible viewpoints are included for completeness.

1.4 Desk-Based Study

Information for the landscape and visual appraisal was gathered from the following sources:

- Project Planning Statement, Sworders, July 2024;
- Project Design and Access Statement, Kay Pilsbury Thomas Architects and Studio Cullinan and Buck Architects Ltd, July 2024 Revision 1;
- Heritage Statement for Alterations and Change of Use at Temple Dinsley Preston, Hitchin SG4 7RT, July 2024 Revision 4;
- Other project design drawings accessed via the North Hertfordshire District Council planning website accessed on 5th and 7th November 2024;
- Preston Conservation Area Character Statement, Wood Environment and Infrastructure Solutions UK Ltd, December 2019;
- Preston Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2018 – 2031, December 2019;
- National Character Area Profile: 110 - Chilterns;
- East of England Landscape Framework;
- Hertfordshire's Landscape Character Assessment;
- Hertfordshire Maps and Geographic Information GIS data for Public Rights of Way and Landscape Character Areas (<https://gisinfo.hertfordshire.gov.uk/GISdata/dldata.htm>, accessed 05/11/2024);
- Natural England Open Data Geoportal (<https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com>, accessed 05/11/2024);

- Historic England Open Data Hub (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/data-downloads/>, accessed 05/11/2024);
- Open data for the location plan and aerial photography; and
- Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 scale site-centred digital raster map.

1.5 Field Study and Study Area

A landscape and visual appraisal of the Site and study area was undertaken in November 2024 to assess:

- The landscape characteristics of the Site and surrounds;
- Views of the Site from publicly accessible locations within the surrounding area;
- The location of visual receptors; and
- The potential landscape and visual effects arising from the proposed development.

The assessment was undertaken from Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and other publicly accessible locations within 2.0 kilometres (km) of the application boundary (the study area). As the assessment builds upon the previously submitted ILA, it includes some viewpoints within the Site. Following a visit to the Site, it was confirmed that discernible visual effects beyond 500m of the Site are unlikely to be experienced.

1.6 Consultations

The ILA for Temple Dinsley focuses upon ‘Primary Important Views’, which comprise *“Landscape and historic views identified as important to the setting of the listed buildings and gardens from a landscape perspective”*. The ILA includes recent photographs, historic photographs and other images with some annotations and descriptive text, followed by an ‘impact assessment’ table.

This LVA aims to supplement the ILA by providing focussed information to address local planning authority feedback relating to the submitted ILA.

The scope is refined and targeted to the following:

- Assessment of likely landscape effects on selected discreet plots within the Site where changes are proposed;
- Summary assessment of likely landscape effects on the wider Site;
- Assessment of likely visual effects on the Preston Neighbourhood Plan ‘Key View 9’, selected view/s identified within the Conservation Area Character Statement and representative views from public locations;
- Assessment of likely visual effects from a limited number of views within the Site, with viewpoint locations based upon descriptions within the heritage statement/ Registered Park and Garden.

1.7 Proposed Development

As set out in the above referenced Planning Statement, the two descriptions for what is being proposed are as follows:

“Full Planning permission for the change of use of the Former Princess Helena College and associated land from a former all-girls boarding school to 69no. private residential dwellings (Use Class C3), including the conversion of the main Grade II Listed House to 35no. new apartments, the conversion of the retained Teaching Block to provide 8 new apartments, the demolition of the existing sports hall building and science block and replacement with 20no. new houses and 2no. new apartments, the conversion of the Tank House and the Pump House buildings to provide 2no. detached dwellings and the erection of 2no. new dwellings located within the ‘summerhouse plantation’. The provision of a new car-park together with domestic storage*

units and covered parking bays to include solar PV Panels, and waste storage units and the provision of new driveways and associated works. In addition, the associated landscaping of the site including provision of new pathways and gates and the reinstatement of Grade II* Listed Parks and Gardens and the provision of a new Cricket Pitch and associated Cricket Pavilion”.

And -

“Listed Building Consent for all works associated with the conversion of the Grade II* Listed Building from the former all-girls boarding school to 35no. new apartments and the works for the reinstatement of the Grade II* Listed Park and Garden at Temple Dinsley, and all works associated with the conversion of the curtilage listed Tank House and Pump House buildings and the demolition of the existing sports hall”.

Figure 3: Proposed Site Plan



The approach to the design of the various aspects of the proposed development is set out in detail within other applications documents, including those referenced above.

2 Landscape Planning Context

- Planning policies and designations are set out in the above referenced Planning Statement and are not repeated here, including Green Belt.

3 Designations and Constraints

This section should be read in conjunction with Drawing 200-01-D1: Landscape Context Plan.

3.1 Designations and Constraints Relevant to Landscape and Visual Matters

There are no landscape designations affecting the Site. Green Belt and the other designations are addressed within other relevant documents including the Planning and Heritage Statements.

4 Landscape Character

This section should be read in conjunction with Drawing 200-01-D2: Landscape Character Plan.

4.1 National and Regional Landscape Character

Hertfordshire County Council (<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/recycling-waste-and-environment/landscape/landscape.aspx>, accessed 08.11.2024 12:00hrs) explains that *"Hertfordshire's landscape character assessment describes the variations in character between different types of landscape in the county...It provides an evidence base for Local Plans and sets out strategies and guidelines for the protection, management and planning of the landscape"*.

It goes on to explain that *"Natural England has produced 159 National Character Area profiles...used to describe and shape objectives for the countryside, its planning and management...In addition, Landscape East has produced the East of England Landscape Framework, which describes the landscape typology across this area"*.

Following desk study and a visit to the Site, it is considered that the local landscape character assessment provides the most appropriate landscape character descriptions for the size and scale of the Site.

4.2 Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment, Updated 2020

The above referred to Hertfordshire website further explains *"Each (landscape character) area is mapped and includes an evaluation of its condition and robustness, and a strategy for influencing positive landscape change"*.

The Site lies entirely within the Offley / St Paul's Walden Landscape Character Area, immediately adjacent to the Langley Scarp Landscape Character Area to the north east. Key aspects of these LCAs in relation to the Site landscape and its visual context are included below.

Offley / St Paul's Walden Landscape Character Area

"The Character Area extends from Little Offley in the north to Crouch Green (south east of St Paul's Walden). It is long (approx 12.5 km) and comparatively narrow. Edges of the plateau are incised by various dry valleys".

Landscape Character is described as *"Gently rolling upland landscape plateau dissected by incised valleys into smaller but still interlinked network of narrow arms extending from the scarp in the north to the lower lying but more developed land to the north of Codicote. Generally more open arable land in the north and more complex patterns to the south. Grazing land adjacent to settlements, varying sizes of woodland often visually interlocking to frame views. Field pattern large in arable areas, however, landscape is often crossed by old winding and sunken lanes. Parkland is a distinctive feature. Individual remnant mature hedgerow trees are a frequent feature in the north but remain an integral part of the hedgerows further south where coppice woodland is also common. Generally scattered settlements and farmsteads with occasional larger settlements"*.

Key characteristics include:

- Gently rolling upland plateau landscape;
- Large arable areas with smaller parcels of grazing land adjacent to settlements;
- Varying sized blocks of deciduous woodland;
- Field pattern generally large scale.

Temple Dinsley is not mentioned in the included distinctive features.

Physical influences notes in relation to vegetation and wildlife *“Ancient moderately acidic oak and hornbeam woodlands centred around Great Offley and Preston are the most ecologically important features of this Character Area”* and *“Groundflora frequently contains species typical of a long continuity of woodland cover, the so-called ‘ancient woodland indicator species’ including bluebells especially frequent around Preston”*. It is noted that there is no Ancient Woodland on the Site, although matters relating to trees and woodland are addressed in the arboriculture and ecology reports respectively.

Field Pattern mentions *“There is a concentration of informal medieval parkland (St Pauls Waldenbury and Temple Dinsley designated Historic Park and Gardens) on the perimeter and to the northwest of Offley”*.

Transport Pattern notes *“The area is well covered by a network of old winding and often sunken lanes. These disappear to the north of Great Offley...”*. St. Albans Highway immediately to the east of the Site is an example of one of these sunken lanes, which together with boundary vegetation restricts views towards the Site.

Visual and Sensory Perception describes a *“Historic and mature landscape character interspersed with areas of intensive arable production”* and *“Small interlocking blocks of woodland framing views”*.

In terms of Rarity & Distinctiveness the assessment states *“The integrity and mature character have not been eroded by the intensification of arable production”*.

In terms of accessibility, *“The Character Area is well served by the network of lanes and public rights of way”*. In general terms, views of the Site are screened from this PRoW network by the sunken and vegetated nature of some lanes as described above, nearby PRoW being located within woodland and Site boundary treatments and vegetation.

The evaluation provides a ‘Moderate’ condition and robustness.

Strategy and Guidelines for Managing Change are *“Improve and Conserve”*. Some examples included within the proposed development are included below:

- *Protect and preserve the pattern of narrow winding lanes and associated hedge banks, sunken lanes, verges and hedges;*
- *Maintain and extend the rights of way network;*
- *Encourage the planting of additional or new oak/hornbeam woodland.*

Langley Scarp Landscape Character Area

“Extensive chalk scarp running from Deacon Hill in the north to Knebworth Park in the south”.

Landscape Character is described as *“Steeply sloping chalk landscape formed by a long narrow belt of land facing the Langley valley and in the south merging into the wooded landscape of Knebworth. Field sizes vary in size, but generally large. Field pattern varies between regular and irregular. Hawthorn hedges enclose fields. Character Area is well wooded, with mature deciduous woodland. Long distance views over the Langley valley to the east”*.

Key characteristics include:

- *Steeply sloping chalk scarp;*
- *Generally well wooded;*
- *Irregular sized fields;*
- *Small sunken lanes and tracks drop down the valley side.*

Temple Dinsley is not mentioned in the included distinctive features.

As this character area is entirely outside the Site, its physical influences are not referred to.

Transport Pattern explains *“Character Area crossed by numerous local lanes, which climb up the valley side”*.

Visual and Sensory Perception states *“The scarp affords a vantage point for panoramic views over the Langley Valley to the east”*. The Site lies to the west.

Visual Impact explains *“Generally unspoilt by development. Long distance views are affected by the relationship to urban fringe areas, especially Stevenage”*. Stevenage lies to the east, whereas The Site lies to the west as mentioned above.

Accessibility notes *“The Character Area is crossed by numerous roads, tracks and rights of way”*. In general terms, the site is screened within views from this Landscape Character Area.

The evaluation rates the Landscape Character Area as having *“Good”* condition and robustness.

Strategy and Guidelines for Managing Change are: *“Conserve and Strengthen”*.

Landscape effects at the Landscape Character Area scale are not considered as part of the LVA due to the insignificant proportion of the entire Character Area occupied by the Site..

4.3 Landscape Character of The Site

The whole of the Site is part of a Registered Park and Garden, with Listed Buildings and part of the Site is located within the Preston Conservation Area. These are heritage based designations and are described in other relevant documents. This LVA does not replicate any of this baseline information but the key landscape characteristics of the Site are set out below. These should be read in conjunction with the Existing Site Plan (drawing number 641-KS-03-XX-DR-A-00001):

- The north western part of the Site comprises buildings and formal gardens, with a tennis court at the northern edge. Landscape elements include ‘institutional’ elements associated with the former school use of the Site, such as signage, lighting columns and sports fencing. The formal gardens are generally in a poor state of repair;
- The north eastern/ eastern part of the Site comprises predominantly deciduous woodland (The ‘Summerhouse Plantation’);
- Immediately to the west of this woodland lies the ‘East Drive’, a tree lined driveway;
- Immediately to the west of the ‘East Drive’ lie more tennis courts, a pavilion and a grass field, with an overall playing field character;
- The remainder of the Site is mature parkland, at the time of writing under grazing by cows.

Site boundaries comprise:

- Close boarded timber fencing and vegetation to the north and north west;
- A high brick wall to the west;
- Trees and hedges to the south and south east;
- Metal railings and then woodland to the east and woodland to the north.

Photographs illustrating some of the above characteristics are included below.

Figure 4: Formal gardens



Figure 4 shows some of the formal gardens to the west of the main building, which are proposed to be restored as part of the proposed development.

Figure 5: Summerhouse Plantation



Figure 5 shows the Summerhouse Plantation and metal boundary railings seen from the East Drive.

Figure 6: Parkland



Figure 5 shows the parkland, with trees along the East Drive containing the view. The building on the right hand side is the Tank House.

Figure 7: Example Site boundary (west)



Figure 7 shows the high brick wall to the west Site boundary, adjoining School Lane.

Figure 8: Example Site boundary (east)



Figure 8 shows boundary vegetation to the east adjoining St. Alban's Highway. The lane becomes deeper as it heads north.

5 Landscape Effects

5.1 Landscape Receptors

As discussed above, the Site has some characteristics of the local LCA: it is situated within and includes some Strategy and Guidelines for Managing Change that are relevant to the proposed development. These include extending the rights of way network and planting new woodland within the Site.

Due to the small size/ scale and limited geographical extent of the proposed changes, in relation to the size of the local LCA, it is not included as a landscape receptor, as effects would be imperceptible at the local LCA scale.

The following key landscape receptors have been identified:

- Selected discreet plots within the Site where changes are proposed; and
- The wider Site.

Selected discreet plots:

- Main Building/ buildings complex and formal gardens including proposed walled parking garden;
- Parkland including Tank House and Pump House; and
- Summerhouse Plantation.

Each is addressed independently in the following section.

5.2 Effects on Landscape Character

Main Building/ buildings complex and formal gardens including proposed walled parking garden

Landscape sensitivity

The Site is given a High landscape value due to the range of applicable, designated heritage assets. The susceptibility to the proposed development is assessed to be Medium in relation to the proposed residential use. The landscape sensitivity to the proposed development is therefore assessed to be High.

Magnitude of effects

The size/ scale of effects is assessed to be Medium in relation to the aesthetic and perceptual characteristics of the landscape. The geographical extent relative to the 'discreet plot' is also assessed to be Medium. The overall magnitude of effects is therefore assessed to be Medium.

Overall landscape effects

The combination of High landscape sensitivity and Medium magnitude of change gives a level of landscape effect of Moderate/Substantial. The removal of detracting, bulky and dated elements such as the sports hall and replacement with contemporary buildings/ structures designed sensitively for both their historic and landscape context is considered to be overall beneficial. The overall landscape effects are therefore judged to be **Moderate/ Substantial beneficial**.

Parkland including Tank House and Pump House

Landscape sensitivity

The Site is given a High landscape value due to the range of applicable designated heritage assets. The susceptibility to the proposed development is assessed to be Medium in relation to the proposed residential use. The landscape sensitivity to the proposed development is therefore assessed to be High.

Magnitude of effects

The size and/or scale of existing landscape elements to be changed would be Low. Introduction of new landscape elements would be likely to be perceived as small scale. In terms of geographical extent, landscape effects would only be discernible across a Small proportion of the 'discreet plot'. The overall magnitude of change is therefore assessed to be Low.

Overall landscape effects

The combination of landscape sensitivity and magnitude of change gives a level of landscape effect of Moderate. The sensitive restoration of built form, proposed soft landscape improvements and improved public accessibility are considered to be beneficial. The overall landscape effects are therefore judged to be **Moderate beneficial**.

Summerhouse Plantation

Landscape sensitivity

The Site is given a Medium landscape value as, although it is located within the Registered Park and Garden, it is a relatively modern landscape element (planted in the early to mid C20), it is outside the Conservation Area and has no Tree Preservation Orders. The project Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report (Sharon Hosegood Associates, July 2024) also at 7.1 states *"The location of the two woodland properties has been based on the areas of lowest arboricultural value, and ensures that the boundary trees are retained..."*.

In terms of susceptibility, whilst the Summerhouse Plantation is a simple but distinctive landscape component from a landscape character perspective, it is enclosed with visual containment and filtering and, limited inter-visibility with visual landmarks. It contains an existing utilitarian structure, which is considered to be a detracting landscape element. The landscape susceptibility to the proposed development is therefore assessed to be Medium. With a Medium value and Medium susceptibility, the sensitivity of this 'discreet plot' is assessed to be Medium.

Magnitude of effects

The extent and relative proportion of existing landscape elements to be changed would be Low. Introduction of new landscape elements would be likely to be perceived as small scale. In terms of geographical extent, landscape effects would only be discernible across a small proportion of the Summerhouse Plantation 'discreet plot'. The overall magnitude of effect is therefore assessed to be Low.

Overall landscape effects

The combination of landscape sensitivity and magnitude of effects gives an overall level of landscape effect of Minor/ Moderate. The sensitive location of the proposed development, thoughtful contemporary design, removal and replacement of a detracting feature and proposed woodland management are considered to be positive landscape interventions. New development would be introduced into part of the plantation currently without built development, although as explained in the Planning Statement this would not increase existing overall built volume. From a purely landscape perspective, the removal of a detracting element and its replacement with a high quality element is assessed as beneficial. The introduction of a new element into the woodland however, resulting in the loss of some woodland, is assessed as adverse. The overall landscape effects are therefore judged to be **Minor/ Moderate adverse**.

The wider site

Landscape sensitivity

Overall, the wider site has a High landscape value but it's susceptibility to the proposed residential use is assessed to be Medium, mainly due to its enclosed nature. With a High value and Medium susceptibility, the sensitivity of the overall site to the proposed development is assessed to be High.

Magnitude of effects

The size and/or scale of existing landscape elements to be changed would be minor. Introduction of new landscape elements would be likely to be perceived as small scale. In terms of geographical extent, landscape effects would only be discernible across the Site. The magnitude of change is therefore assessed to be Moderate.

Overall landscape effects

The combination of landscape sensitivity and magnitude of change gives a level of landscape effect of Moderate. The sensitive location of proposed development, heritage led restoration, landscape and heritage led contemporary design, removal of detracting features and proposed landscape and access improvements (in line with local LCA strategy and guidelines) are assessed to be beneficial. The overall landscape effects of the proposed development upon the wider site are therefore judged to be **Moderate beneficial**.

6 Visual Context

6.1 General Extent of Visibility

As described above, the Site is generally screened from surrounding viewpoints and visual receptors and visual receptors outside the Site are mainly fast moving motorised transport users whose attention would be focussed upon driving.

Representative Viewpoints

An assessment of visual effects was undertaken from five publicly accessible viewpoints representing views from key receptors, at varying distances and orientations from the Site (Refer to Viewpoints 1 to 5 below). These are supplemented with four viewpoints within the Site, which represent views included within the ILA for completeness. Viewpoint locations are shown on Drawing 200-01-03: Visual Context.

7 Visual Effects

7.1 Viewpoint Assessment



Viewpoint 1: Represents Preston Neighbourhood Plan View K, ‘Towards Temple Dinsley’

Receptor Type and Location	Viewer Type	Distance	Direction	Date	Grid Reference
Viewpoint Location Refer Dwg 03	Permissive Footpath users	Inside	NW	12/11/24	E518626, N224465
Existing view	The photograph represents Preston Neighbourhood Plan View K looking over parkland towards Temple Dinsley with the Tank House and Pump House seen in the middle distance.				
Potential visual effects	As part of a Registered Park and Garden, the value of the view is assessed to be High. Although this is not currently a formal Public Right of Way, the susceptibility of the visual receptor is assessed to be High. The sensitivity of the key receptor is therefore assessed to be High. There would be a perceptible change in the view mainly associated with the introduction of additional landscape elements associated with the proposed residential use of the Tank House and Pump House. The magnitude of change is therefore assessed to be Low. It should be noted that proposed development within the Summerhouse Plantation would not be visible from this viewpoint. The overall level of effect is assessed to be Moderate. The nature of effect is assessed to be beneficial as the proposed development would restore high quality landscape features currently vacant/ in poor condition. The overall visual effects are judged to be Moderate beneficial.				



Viewpoint 2: Towards the main entrance to the Site from School Lane

Receptor Type and Location	Viewer Type	Distance	Direction	Date	Grid Reference
Viewpoint Location Refer Dwg 03	Road Users	20 m	NE	12/11/24	E518184, N224541
Existing view	The photograph represents Key View 4 in the Preston Conservation Area Character Statement. The main drive can be seen through the gates. The angle of the view allows the left hand gate pillar to the southern entrance that would form the access to the Tank House and Pump House to be seen on the right hand side.				
Potential visual effects	The value of the view within a Conservation Area is assessed as High but travellers on roads are given a Medium susceptibility. The sensitivity of the receptor is assessed as High. There would be a negligible change to the view giving a level of effect of Minor. The general repairs and reinstatements are assessed as beneficial, giving an overall visual effect of Minor beneficial .				



Viewpoint 3: Towards the Site from Preston Village Green

Receptor Type and Location	Viewer Type	Distance	Direction	Date	Grid Reference
Viewpoint Location Refer Dwg 03	Road Users	30 m	ENE	27/11/24	E518018, N224728
Existing view	The photograph represents Key View 3 in the Preston Conservation Area Character Statement, albeit closer to the Site to allow a wider angle of view. The Site boundary is seen beyond School Lane, on the right hand side of the photo comprising a high brick wall and on the left a timber close boarded fence.				
Potential visual effects	The proposed development would not be visible from this viewpoint, meaning there would be No Change .				



Viewpoint 4: Hitchin Road in front of Preston Recreation Ground to the north east of The Site

Receptor Type and Location	Viewer Type	Distance	Direction	Date	Grid Reference
Viewpoint Location Refer Dwg 03	Road Users	10 m	ESE	12/11/24	E518048, N224912
Existing view	The photograph represents views from the north east of the Site. The Site is enclosed by close boarded timber fencing and vegetation.				
Potential visual effects	The proposed development would not be visible from this viewpoint, meaning there would be No Change .				



Viewpoint 5: Preston Road, north east of The Dower House

Receptor Type and Location	Viewer Type	Distance	Direction	Date	Grid Reference
Viewpoint Location Refer Dwg 03	Road Users	200 m	SSE	12/11/24	E518255, N225229
Existing view	This photograph represents a glimpsed view through an agricultural field entrance off Preston Road to the north of the Site. The photograph was taken from an elevated position for safety reasons as the road is narrow and has the national speed limit. The Summerhouse Plantation forms the backdrop of the view, wrapping over undulating terrain.				
Potential visual effects	The value of the view is assessed to be Medium, for reasons discussed in the assessment of landscape effects above. The susceptibility of the receptor is assessed to be Medium for travellers on roads, in line with the LVA methodology, giving a Medium sensitivity. The proposed development of the two houses within the plantation would be barely perceptible, giving a Negligible magnitude of change. The level of effect is assessed to be Negligible/ Minor. Although likely to be barely perceptible, new housing development within the view is likely to be perceived as adverse, giving an overall visual effect of Negligible/ Minor adverse .				



Viewpoint 6: Main Drive

Receptor Type and Location	Viewer Type	Distance	Direction	Date	Grid Reference
Viewpoint Location Refer Dwg 03	Visitors to The Site	Inside	NE	12/11/24	E518197, N224655
Existing view	This photograph represents ILA views 1 and 2 from the main drive. The main building is seen on the left and The Piggery on the right.				
Potential visual effects	The value of the view within the Registered Park and Garden is assessed to be High. The susceptibility of the receptor is difficult to assess as these would likely be residents or people visiting residents. To present a worse case scenario, the sensitivity of the receptor is assessed as High. The magnitude of change is assessed as Negligible. The proposed walled parking garden is unlikely to be perceptible within the view. The level of effect is assessed to be Minor. The sensitive approach to design and conservation is assessed as beneficial, giving an overall visual effect of Minor beneficial .				



Viewpoint 7: East Drive

Receptor Type and Location	Viewer Type	Distance	Direction	Date	Grid Reference
	Visitors to The Site	Inside	NW	12/11/24	E518576, N224745
Viewpoint Location Refer Dwg 03					
Existing view	This photograph represents ILA views 15 and 16 along the East Drive. The Summerhouse Plantation is seen on the right hand side of the photo.				
Potential visual effects	The proposed development would not be visible from this viewpoint, meaning there would be No Change .				



Viewpoint 8: Northern end of the east drive looking west

Receptor Type and Location	Viewer Type	Distance	Direction	Date	Grid Reference
Viewpoint Location Refer Dwg 03	Visitors to the Site	Inside	SW	12/11/24	E518321, N224884
Existing view	This photograph represents ILA view 13 from the East Drive towards the main building. The foreground is dominated by existing parking hard standing, albeit beginning to support vegetation due to lack of maintenance.				
Potential visual effects	The value of the view within the Registered Park and Garden is assessed to be High. The susceptibility of the receptor is difficult to assess as these would likely be residents or people visiting residents. To present a worse case scenario, the sensitivity of the receptor is assessed as High. The magnitude of change is assessed as Low, as there would be a perceptible change within the view due to additional parking arrangements. With a High sensitivity and Low magnitude of effect, the level of visual effect would be Moderate. Although a sensitive and heritage led design is employed, the effect is assessed to be adverse as new development would be perceived within the landscape. The overall visual effect is therefore judged to be Moderate adverse , although there would be no adverse effects on publicly available views.				



Viewpoint 9: View south west from the orchard

Receptor Type and Location	Viewer Type	Distance	Direction	Date	Grid Reference
Viewpoint Location Refer Dwg 03	Visitors to the Site	Inside	SW	12/11/24	E518147, N224868
Existing view	This photograph represents ILA view 8. The Belvedere is seen on the left hand side of the photo, with the pergola running towards the main buildings. Beyond the pergola and east of the Belvedere, the bulky former sports hall gable end can be seen.				
Potential changes to the view	The value of the view within the Registered Park and Garden, including Listed Buildings, is assessed to be High. The susceptibility of the receptor is difficult to assess as these would likely be residents or people visiting residents. To present a worse case scenario, the sensitivity of the receptor is assessed as High. The magnitude of change is assessed as Low, as there would be a perceptible change within the view due to the replacement of modern buildings with new houses. With a High sensitivity and Low magnitude of effect, the level of visual effect would be Moderate. As detracting elements would be removed and replaced with sensitively designed elements and repairs/ conservation work to landscape elements would be carried out, the effect is assessed to be beneficial. The overall visual effect is therefore judged to be Moderate beneficial .				

8 Summary and Conclusion

A landscape and visual appraisal has been carried out in line with current best practice guidance. This has assessed likely effects upon landscape and visual receptors to the proposed development.

Three discreet landscape plots within the Site were found to have likely overall effects of:

- Main Building/ buildings complex and formal gardens including proposed walled parking garden: Moderate / substantial beneficial;
- Parkland including Tank House and Pump House: Moderate beneficial; and
- Summerhouse Plantation: Minor/ Moderate adverse.

The wider site in the context of the whole proposed development was found to have likely overall landscape effects of:

- Moderate beneficial.

From a visual perspective, 5 no. public viewpoints were found to have to have likely overall visual effects of:

- Moderate beneficial;
- Minor beneficial;
- 2 no. no change; and
- Negligible/ Minor adverse.

4 no. private viewpoints within the site were found to have to have likely overall visual effects of:

- Minor beneficial;
- No change;
- Moderate adverse; and
- Moderate beneficial.

In conclusion, the findings are that the majority of likely landscape and visual effects arising from the proposed development would be beneficial.

Whilst two adverse directions of effect have been found, it is emphasised that the single minor/ moderate adverse landscape effect relates to a relatively small and discreet plot within the Site only and that wider Site level effects are found to be beneficial. There are no adverse landscape effects beyond the Site itself.

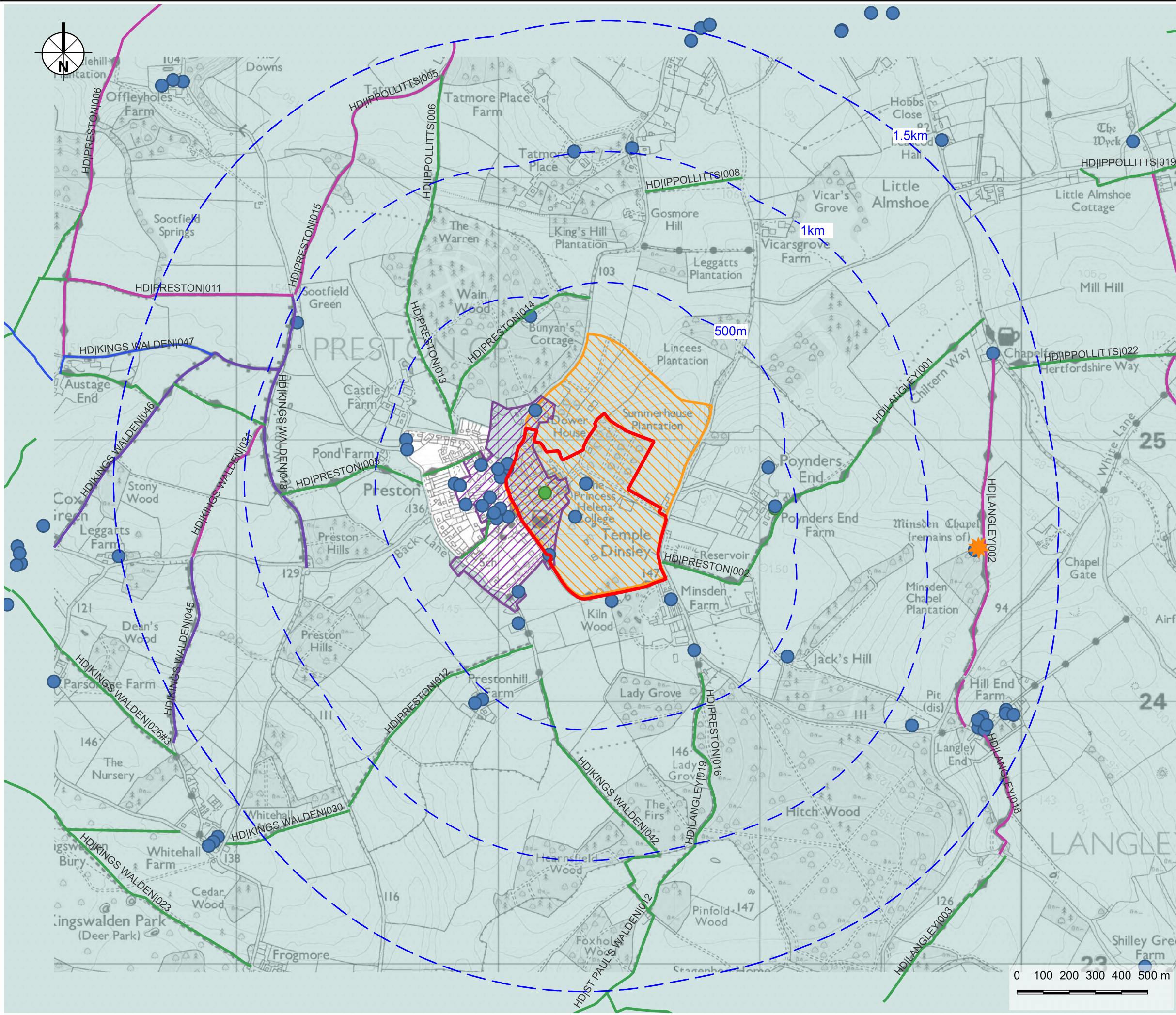
Adverse visual effects relate to one glimpsed view for motorists close to the Site boundary and one private view within the Site only. No other adverse visual effects beyond the Site or to public receptors have been found.

Drawings

Drawing 200-01-D1: Landscape Context Plan

Drawing 200-01-D2: Landscape Character Plan

Drawing 200-01-D3: Visual Context Plan



Legend

Radius from Site Boundary at 500m Intervals

Application Boundary

Scheduled Monuement

Public Rights of Way

Restricted Byway

Footpath

Bridleway

Byway open to all traffic (BOAT)

Listed Buildings

Grade II*

Grade II

Conservation Areas

Registered Parks and Gardens

Scheduled_Monuments

Green Belt

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Client

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Project

Temple Dinsley

Drawing Title

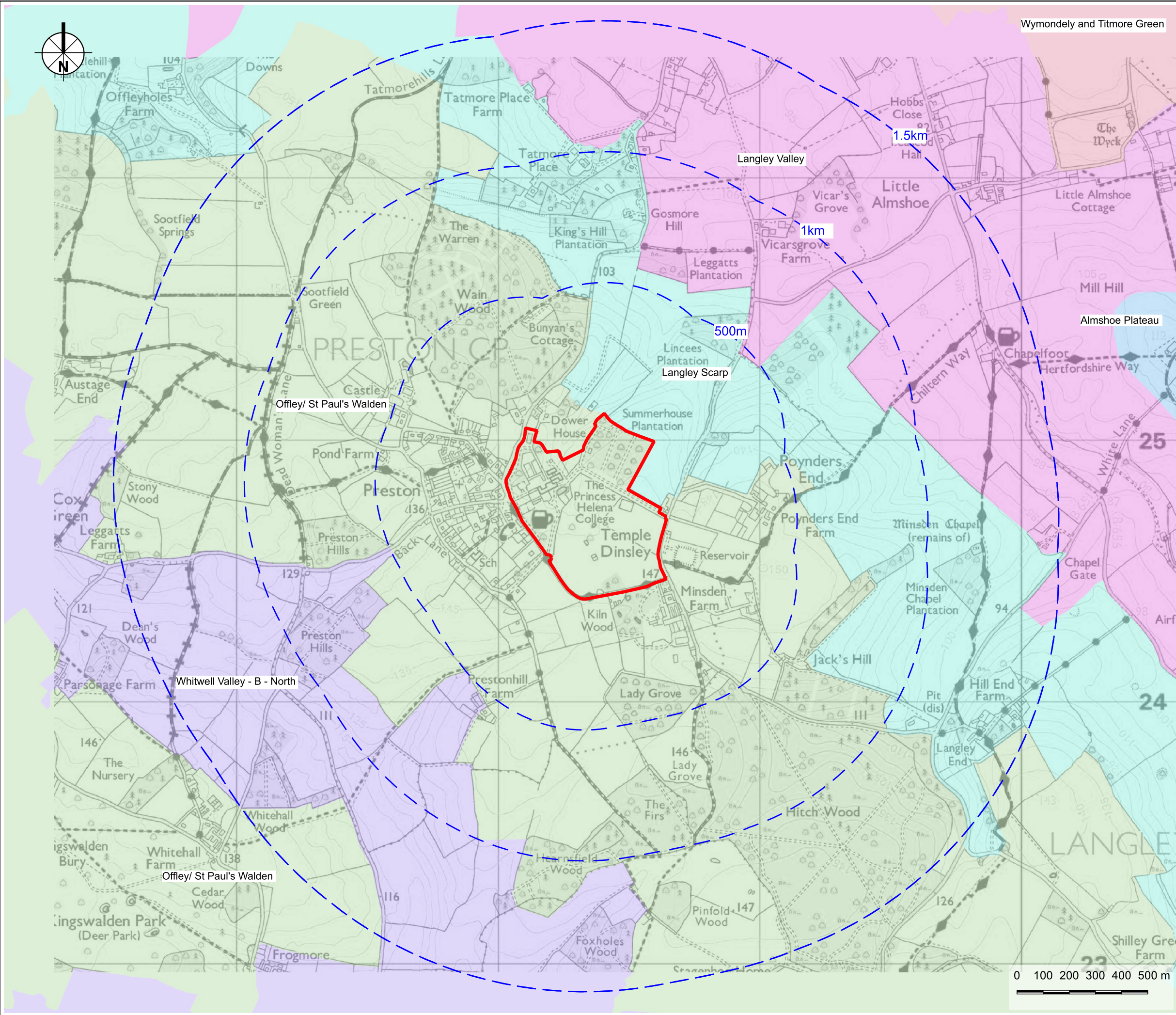
Landscape Context Plan

Created by	Reviewer	Sheet Size	Scale	Date Created
JE	DB	A3	1:14,000	05.11.24

Drawing Number	Revision
200-01-D1	00

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Legend

Application Boundary

Radius from Site Boundary at 500m Intervals

Landscape Character Areas
Hertfordshire County Council (2009)

Almshoe Plateau

Langley Scarp

Langley Valley

Offley / St Paul's Walden

Whitwell Valley - B - North

Wymondley and Titmore Green

110 Chilterns National Character area lies within the study area

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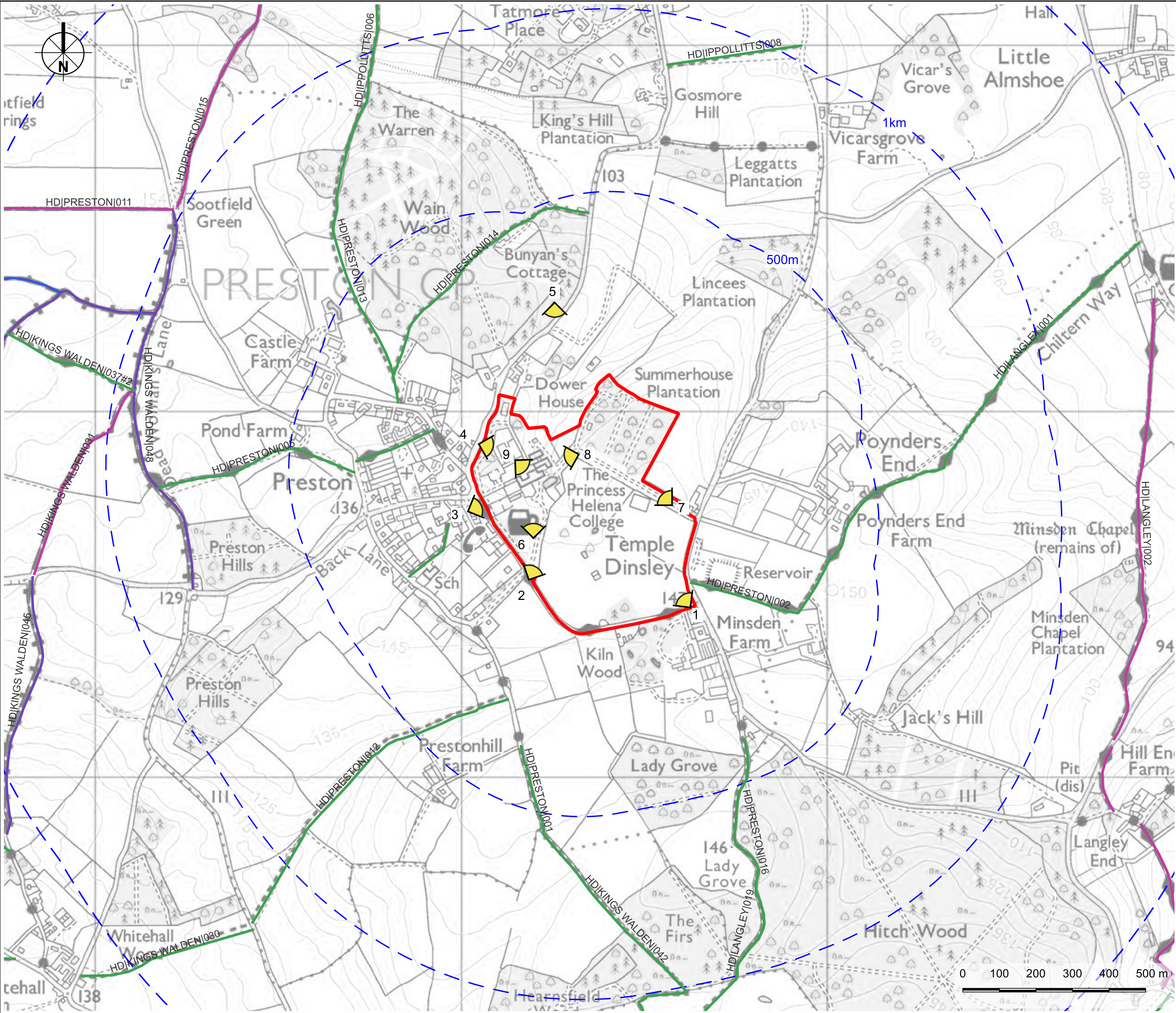
Temple Dinsley

Drawing Title

Landscape Character Plan

Created by	Reviewer	Sheet Size	Scale	Date Created
JE	DB	A3	1:14,000	05.11.24
Drawing Number				Revision
200-01-D3				00

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Legend

- Application Boundary
- Radius from Site Boundary at 500m Intervals
- Public Rights of Way**
 - Restricted Byway
 - Footpath
 - Bridleway
 - Byway open to all traffic (BOAT)
- Viewpoint Locations

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Client
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Project
Temple Dinsley

Drawing Title
Visual Context Plan

Created by JE	Reviewer RC	Sheet Size A3	Scale 1:10,000	Date Created 14.11.24
Drawing Number 200-01-D3				Revision 00

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Appendices

Appendix A: Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology

Appendix A

Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology (DRaW UK Limited)

Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology (DRaW UK Limited)

Introduction

The purpose of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is to identify the potential effects on the landscape character and the changes to views experienced by the inhabitants.

LVIA is either carried out formally as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process or informally as a contribution to a planning application to provide a general understanding of the environmental effects of a development. In both cases the general principles and approach remain the same, although the approach for a non EIA development may be simplified and classification of significance is not a requirement.

It is important to note that there is a distinction to be made between landscape and visual effects:

- Landscape effects are the result of a change to the fabric, character or quality of the landscape as a result of development. These could include direct impacts on features such as loss of woodland, or effects on landscape character, designation and protected landscapes.
- Visual effects result from a change in views or the visual amenity experienced by people.

Guidance and Approach

This assessment methodology has been developed from:

- 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA), Third Edition, published by the Landscape Institute & Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2013;
- TGN 02/21 'Assessing landscape value outside national designations', published by the Landscape Institute, 2021;
- 'Technical Guidance Note 02/21 Assessing landscape value outside national designations', Landscape Institute 2021; and
- 'Technical Guidance Note LI TGN-2024-01 Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third edition (GLVIA3)', Landscape Institute, August 2024.

It should be noted that the above guidance does not dictate a prescriptive methodology, instead it encourages practitioners to develop transparent and logical methods, using standardised terminology and which are proportionate the type and size of development proposed.

The following methodology sets out the general approach to the LVIA process adopted by DRaW (UK) Ltd.

Assessing Landscape Effects

Evaluating Landscape Sensitivity

The method used to categorise landscape sensitivity, is based on Paragraphs 5.39 – 5.47 of GLVIA3.

The sensitivity of a landscape, or its individual components, is defined by a product of its value and its susceptibility to change.

Evaluating Landscape Value and Its Susceptibility to Change Outside National Designations

Landscape value is defined as the ‘value attached to the landscape by society’ (Paragraph 5.19 of GLVIA3). It is based on a range of factors set out in TGN 02/21 ‘Assessing landscape value outside national designations’ which are summarised in Table A1 below.

Landscape susceptibility is defined as “*The ability of the landscape (whether it be the overall character or quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area, or an individual element and/or feature, or a particular aesthetic and perceptual aspect) 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*” (Paragraph 5.40 of GLVIA3).

Table A1 Landscape Value and Susceptibility to Change Outside National Designations

	Landscape Value	Susceptibility of the Landscape to Change
High	Natural Heritage: Landscape with clear evidence of ecological, geological, geomorphological or physiographic interest. Cultural Heritage: Landscape with clear evidence of archaeological, historical or cultural interest. Landscape condition: Landscape in a good physical state. Associations: Landscape which is connected with notable people, events and the arts. Distinctiveness: Landscape has a strong sense of identity. Recreational: Landscape offering recreational opportunities and good access. Perceptual (Scenic): Landscape that appeals to the senses, primarily visual sense. Perceptual (Wildness and tranquility): Landscape with a strong perceptual value notably wildness, tranquility and/or dark skies. Functional: Landscape performs a clearly identifiable and valuable function.	Pattern, complexity and physical susceptibility to change: A strongly patterned/ textured or a simple but distinctive landscape and/or with high value features and essentially intact. Visual susceptibility to change: An open or exposed landscape with extensive inter-visibility and no or very limited visual filtering or enclosure. Prominent visual landmarks may be present, and inter-visibility with designated landscapes may occur. Experiential susceptibility: A very tranquil, wild or remote landscape with little or no sense of visual or aural intrusion. A landscape which contains very few light sources and provides dark skies.
Medium	Natural Heritage: Landscape with limited evidence of ecological, geological, geomorphological or physiographic interest. Cultural Heritage: Landscape with limited evidence of archaeological, historical or cultural interest. Landscape condition: Landscape in a moderate physical state. Associations: Landscape has limited connections with notable people, events and the arts. Distinctiveness: Landscape has a moderate sense of identity. Recreational: Landscape offering limited recreational opportunities or limited access Perceptual (Scenic): Landscape has limited appeal to the senses. Perceptual (Wildness and tranquility): Landscape of limited perceptual value in terms of wildness, tranquility and/or dark skies. Functional: Landscape has limited function.	Pattern, complexity and physical susceptibility to change: A landscape with mostly intact pattern and/or with a degree of complexity and with features mostly in reasonable condition. Visual susceptibility to change: A partially enclosed landscape with some visual containment and filtering, possible limited inter-visibility with visual landmarks and designated landscapes. Experiential susceptibility: A partially tranquil landscape with limited visual and/or aural intrusion, some relationship with built development/ infrastructure may be present. A landscape which contains some light sources.

Low	Natural Heritage: Landscape with no evidence of ecological, geological, geomorphological or physiographic interest. Cultural Heritage: Landscape with no evidence of archaeological, historical or cultural interest. Landscape condition: Landscape in a poor physical state. Associations: Landscape has no connections with notable people, events and the arts. Distinctiveness: Landscape has a no sense of identity. Recreational: Landscape offering no recreational opportunities or with no access Perceptual (Scenic): Landscape has no appeal to the senses. Perceptual (Wildness and tranquility): Landscape of no perceptual value in terms of wildness, tranquility and/or dark skies. Functional: Landscape has apparent function.	Pattern, complexity and physical susceptibility to change: A simple, monotonous and/or degraded landscape with common/ indistinct features and minimal variation in landscape pattern. Visual susceptibility to change: A very enclosed landscape which contains or strongly filters views, with an absence of visual landmarks and a lack of inter-visibility with designated landscapes. Experiential susceptibility: A landscape with prominent visual and/or aural intrusion and close relationship with large scale built development/ infrastructure. A landscape which contains many light sources and essentially suffers from light pollution.
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Evaluating Landscape Value and Its Susceptibility to Change Within National Designations

Within nationally designated landscapes the value is high, as defined by Paragraph 5.47 GLVIA3 '*Landscapes that are nationally designated will be accorded the highest value in the assessment.*' and further defined by Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01, August 2024, 5(7) which states '*landscape value within nationally designated landscapes should be at the highest level (e.g. expressed as high/ very high/ of national value)*'.

Evaluating Landscape sensitivity

Criterion used to categorise landscape sensitivity, in relation to Paragraphs 5.39 – 5.47 of GLVIA3, are described in Table A2- Landscape Sensitivity.

The sensitivity of the landscape as a whole, (or components of it), is calculated using Table A2 to correlate 'landscape value' and 'susceptibility to change'.

Table A2 Landscape Sensitivity

	Landscape Value			
Susceptibility of the Landscape		Low	Medium	High
	High	Medium	High	High
	Medium	Low	Medium	High
	Low	Low	Low	Medium

Evaluating the magnitude of landscape effects

The 'magnitude' of landscape effects resulting from the construction and/or the operation of a particular development is categorised as high, medium, low or negligible. In accordance with the approach advocated in Paragraphs 5.48 – 5.52 of GLVIA3 the magnitude of landscape effect considers the size and scale of the change, the geographical extent over which each landscape effects would be felt and their duration and reversibility.

Criterion used to categorise landscape effect are listed in Table A3 -Magnitude of Landscape Effect.

Table A3 - Magnitude of Landscape Effect

Magnitude of landscape effects	Key Determining Criteria
High	Size and/or scale: the extent and relative proportion of the existing landscape element(s) to be changed would be large and/or the landscape element(s) lost or created make a key contribution to landscape character and/or value. Introduction of new landscape elements that would be likely to be perceived as a dominant landscape characteristic. Large scale alteration to the aesthetic and perceptual characteristics of the landscape. Geographical extent: effects would be discernible across a large majority or the entirety of the landscape designation or character area. Duration and reversibility of effects: Notable landscape effects would last over 10 years, or effects could not be reversed/mitigated.
Medium	Size and/or scale: the extent and relative proportion of the existing landscape element(s) to be changed would be moderate and/or any landscape elements lost or created make a moderate contribution to landscape character and/or value. Introduction of new landscape elements that would be likely to be perceived as a prominent landscape characteristic. Moderate scale alteration to the aesthetic and perceptual characteristics of the landscape. Geographical extent: effects would be discernible across a moderate proportion of the landscape designation or character area. Duration and reversibility of effects: Notable landscape effects would last between 5 and 10 years, or effects could be partially reversed/ mitigated.
Low	Size and/or scale: the extent and relative proportion of the existing landscape element(s) to be changed would be minor and/or any landscape element(s) lost or created make only a minor contribution to landscape character and/or value. Introduction of new landscape elements that would be likely to be perceived as a small-scale landscape characteristic. Small scale alteration to the aesthetic and perceptual characteristics of the landscape. Geographical extent: effects would be discernible across a small proportion of the landscape designation or character area and/or restricted to the close vicinity of the development site. Duration and reversibility of effects: Notable landscape effects would last between 2 and 5 years, or effects could be substantially reversed/mitigated.
Negligible	Size and/or scale: the extent and relative proportion of the existing landscape element(s) to be changed would be barely perceptible and/or any landscape element(s) lost or created make a minimal or no contribution to landscape character and/or value. Introduction of new landscape elements that will be likely to be imperceptible. Minimal alteration to the aesthetic and perceptual characteristics of the landscape. Geographical extent: effects would only be discernible within the development site or its immediate surrounds. Duration and reversibility of effects: Notable landscape effects would last less than two years, or effects could be fully reversed/mitigated.
None	The proposals would not change the landscape or its character

The direction of effect will either be:

- **‘Beneficial’**, resulting in an improvement in the quality of the view/landscape, or
- **‘Adverse’** resulting in a deterioration in the quality of the view or landscape compared to existing.

Assessing Visual Effects

“An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects on views available to people and their visual amenity... assessing how the surroundings of individuals or groups of people may be specifically affected by changes in the content and character of views as a result of the change or loss of existing elements of the landscape and/or introduction of new elements” (Para 6.1GLVIA3).

Evaluating Visual Sensitivity

The visual sensitivity is calculated by combining the value attributed to a view with the susceptibility of the viewer. The method used to categorise the sensitivity of visual receptors, is based on Paragraphs 6.30– 6.37 of GLVIA3.

Evaluating Value of a View and Susceptibility of the Viewer to Change

The Value attributed to a view is defined by the criteria listed in in Table A4.

Susceptibility of the viewer is defined by the occupation or activity of the people experiencing the views at particular locations and by the extent to which their attention or interest may be focused on the views as defined by the criteria listed in in Table A4.

Criterion used to categorise visual sensitivity (combination of value and susceptibility), are listed in Table A4 - Visual Sensitivity.

Table A4 - Visual Sensitivity

Visual receptor sensitivity	Factors Influencing Value of a View	Susceptibility of Visual Receptor to Change
High	The view is valued at a national or regional level. The view is of high scenic quality, often protected by planning designations. It is a visitor destination, or heritage asset, where views of the surrounding are an important contributor to the experience. There are references to the view in literature or art, or the view appears in guidebooks or on tourist maps. It is a strategic location or viewpoint which attracts large number of viewers.	Communities or residents at home, where views contribute to the setting or visual amenity of the house or settlement. Travellers on recreational or scenic routes, (including public rights of way) where awareness of views is likely to be high. People who are engaged in outdoor recreation, whose attention or interest is likely to be focussed on the landscape, or on particular views.
Medium	The view is valued at a local level. It is mostly frequented by local people. The view is not publicised or waymarked. It is unremarkable but reasonable pleasant. There are some detracting features in the views.	Travellers on road, rail, or local paths (including public rights of way) for which views are not the primary focus, although they do contribute to the setting of the route.
Low	The view is of limited local value. The view is of low aesthetic quality and may detract from the surroundings. It is not a publically accessible location.	People engaged in activity which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the surrounding landscape. People at their place of work, whose attention may be focussed on their work or activity, not on their surroundings, and where the setting is not important to the quality of life.

Evaluating Viewer Sensitivity

The sensitivity of a visual receptor is calculated using Table A5 to correlate the ‘value of the viewer’ with their ‘susceptibility to change’.

Table A5 Viewer Sensitivity

	Value of the View			
Susceptibility of the Viewer		Low	Medium	High
	High	Medium	High	High
	Medium	Low	Medium	High
	Low	Low	Low	Medium

Evaluating the magnitude of visual effect

The magnitude of visual effect is defined by the size/ scale of change, the geographical extent of the view affected and the duration and reversibility of the change caused by the development/ operation proposed. (Paragraph 5.48 GLVIA3)

The magnitude of visual effect is assessed in relation to the following:

- **Size and Scale:** The scale of change in the view is determined by the loss or addition of features in the view, changes in the composition of view and the proportion of view affected.
- **Geographical Extent:** Is assessed in relation to the Zone of Theoretical Visibility, taking into account the angle of view, the distance from the viewpoint, the extent, or number of receptors affected.
- **Duration and Reversibility:** The duration of the visual change, whether temporary or long term; intermittent or continuous; as well as the role of seasonal changes due to management such as hedgerow trimming and seasonal variations in deciduous leaf cover.

Criterion used to categorise the magnitude visual effect, are listed in Table A6 – Magnitude of Visual Effect.

Table A6 - Magnitude of Visual Effect

Magnitude of visual effect	Key determining criteria
High	Size and Scale A complete or very substantial change or obstruction of the view. Geographical Extent Large numbers of receptors affected, or close proximity view, and/or unrestricted/unmitigated direct line-of-sight/development not screened. Duration and Reversibility Notable visual effects would last over 10 years, or effects could not be reversed/mitigated.
Medium	Size and Scale An obvious, immediately apparent change and/or obstruction of the view. Geographical Extent Multiple receptors affected, or medium distance view, and/or partially restricted/mitigated line-of-sight/ development partially screened. Duration and Reversibility Notable visual effects would last between 5 and 10 years, or effects could be partially reversed/ mitigated.
Low	Size and Scale A perceptible change and/or obstruction of the view. Geographical Extent Small number of receptors affected, or distant view, or restricted/ oblique line-of-sight/ development substantially screened. Duration and Reversibility Notable visual effects would last between 2 and 5 years, or effects could be substantially reversed/mitigated.

Negligible	Size and Scale A barely perceptible or intermittent change or obstruction of the view. Geographical Extent Occasional or Isolated receptor affected, or distant view, or largely restricted line-of-sight /development screened. Duration and Reversibility Notable visual effects would last less than two years, or effects could be fully reversed/mitigated.
None	The proposals would not change the view or visual amenity of the receptor.

The direction of effect will either be:

- **‘Beneficial’**, resulting in an improvement in the quality of the view/landscape, or
- **‘Adverse’** resulting in a deterioration in the quality of the view or landscape compared to existing.

Judging the significance of landscape and visual effects

The significance of a landscape or visual effect is determined by correlating the sensitivity of the receptor (high, medium to low) with the magnitude of effect (high to negligible). The evaluation is based on professional judgment using Table A7 as a guide.

Table A7 –Significance of landscape and visual effects.

		Sensitivity of the Receptor		
		Low	Medium	High
Magnitude of Effect	High	Moderate	Moderate/Substantial	Substantial
	Medium	Minor/Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/Substantial
	Low	Minor	Minor/Moderate	Moderate
	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible/Minor	Minor

For the assessment of proposed development subject to EIA Regulations ‘Moderate/Substantial’ and ‘Substantial’ levels of significance are deemed to be ‘significant effects’.

Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01, published August 2024, states in relation to “*How to carry out non EIA Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) ...In carrying out an LVA, the same principles and process as set out in GLVIA3 may be applied to report on effects (identifying the relative importance/ levels of the effects on a scale with reference to sensitivity and magnitude of effect), but it is not required to establish whether the effects arising are or are not significant. Effects should be comparable between LVA and LVIA. For example, a ‘moderate effect’ should be the same in both assessment contexts*”.

For LVAs, Table A7 is used to determine the overall level of effect, rather than significance of effect.