



Berry Hill Road, Adderbury

Landscape and Visual Appraisal Addendum

February 2018

On behalf of HOLLINS STRATEGIC LAND





Berry Hill Road, Adderbury

Landscape and Visual Appraisal Addendum

Project no. 2713

February 2018

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In support of a planning application for residential development, Peter Brett Associates (PBA) produced a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) in September 2017. In post application discussions with the Landscape Officer from Cherwell District Council, it was agreed that Viridian Landscape Planning would produce Landscape and Visual Impact tables based on the predicted effects from the original PBA viewpoints, as well as additional viewpoints, all photographed in winter conditions in January 2018. The tables consider the effects on landscape (including landscape character) and people's views / visual amenity as separate assessment components.

The tables do not form part of a LVIA, which is often part of a wider Environmental Impact Assessment, but instead are a supplement to the LVA, providing more detail on the likely effects of the proposal.

The surrounding vegetation on three sides as well as the woodland and hedgerows, including that along the elevated former railway, provide substantial separation of the site from its context, and in particular the village of Adderbury. Avoiding development on the northern part of the site reduces the potential visibility further, especially in views from the north-west.

The Landscape Effects table shows that all effects on landscape receptors were assessed as Not Significant, except for the effects on Local Landscape: Character of Site and Surrounding Area where a Moderate Adverse effect was shown, regarded as Significant, largely as a result of the change of the character of about 50% of the site from paddocks to residential.

The Visual Effects table shows Significant Adverse effects on only two viewpoints out of the sixteen selected, and in both cases those effects were only of moderate significance as a result of the moderate sensitivity of the receptors, which were both users of public footpaths.

Owing to the substantial tree belt on the southern site boundary along Berry Hill Road, clear views of the Church of St Mary the Virgin across the site are limited in winter, when the situation is regarded as 'worst case' without the additional screening provided by leaves on trees and hedges. The most open existing view of the church across the site is from the existing gate off Berry Hill Road and which is only a fleeting view for receptors, most of whom are road users. The development has been designed to accommodate that view and open up a new view from the south-western part of the site. Additionally, by allowing public access to the site as a result of the development and the extensive area of open space, clear and open views of the church will be made available, which are currently only available to those who have access to the private land.



1 METHODOLOGY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 The methodology used by Viridian Landscape Planning for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is based on professional experience, the Landscape Institute / Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (3rd Edition, 2013).

1.1.2 The assessment of landscape and visual effects aims to be as objective as possible, however professional judgements are required to be made, as the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition, 2013) explains in paragraph 2.23, page 21:

'Professional judgement is a very important part of LVIA. Whilst there is some scope for quantitative measurement of some relatively objective matters, for example the number of trees lost to construction... much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements, for example about what effect the introduction of a new development of land use change may have on visual amenity, or about the significance of change in the character in the landscape and whether it is positive or negative.'

1.1.3 The assessment of landscape and visual effects makes comparison with the baseline year of **2018**, and includes assessment on completion of the development.

1.2 BASELINE DATA FOR THE LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT

1.2.1 A data trawl was undertaken by PBA as part of the LVA, which established the baseline landscape and landscape character information, including topography, landscape planning designations and published sources of landscape character.

1.2.2 Sources of information for the data trawl are set out in the LVA.

1.3 SITE APPRAISAL AND PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

1.3.1 The site and surrounding area were visited and a photographic record undertaken of the selected assessment viewpoints, in order to:

- a. Determine the extent of visibility of existing built structures;
- b. Determine the visibility of the proposed development, utilising the results from the ZTV plan to guide the field work;
- c. Gain further understanding of the components which create the landscape character; and
- d. Carry out the assessment of landscape and visual effects.

1.4 ASSESSMENT STAGES

1.4.1 A three-stage process was undertaken, in accordance with the Landscape Institute/Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment guidelines. The following were assessed:



- i. the nature of receptors (sensitivity);
- ii. the nature of effects (magnitude) likely to result from the proposed development; and
- iii. the significance of the identified landscape and visual effects on receptors, as required by the European Union Directive 2011/92/EU and UK Country Regulations.

1.5 DURATION OF EFFECTS

1.5.1 Effects may be temporary, permanent or reversible over time. The following terminology was used to describe the duration of landscape and visual effects arising as a result of the development proposals:

- a. Short term: less than 1 year;
- b. Medium term: 1-15 years; and
- c. Long term: longer than 15years.

1.6 NATURE OF EFFECTS

1.6.1 The nature of effects may be positive (beneficial) or negative (adverse) and direct or indirect. Direct effects are those which result directly from the development; whereas indirect, or secondary, effects may arise as a consequential change resulting from the development, for example: changes to offsite and downstream vegetation as a result of alterations to a drainage regime.

1.7 ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

1.7.1 This assesses how the proposed development will affect the landscape components of the site (the 'landscape fabric', for example: landform, land use, hedgerows and trees, public rights of way, ponds or other features), and the key characteristics which contribute to its distinctive character (the 'landscape character').

1.7.2 A methodical consideration of each effect upon each identified landscape receptor was undertaken, in order to determine the significance of effects, in terms of:

- a. Value and susceptibility to change (sensitivity of the landscape receptor); and
- b. Size / scale, extent, duration and reversibility (magnitude of the landscape effect).

SENSITIVITY OF LANDSCAPE RECEPTORS

1.7.3 The assessment of landscape receptor sensitivity combines judgements on the value attributed to the landscape receptor and the 'susceptibility to change' of the receptor to the specific type of development proposed.

1.7.4 The value of potentially affected landscape receptors was assessed, including landscape character and the elements or features which contribute to that landscape character. Landscapes may be valued at community, local, national or international levels. Existing landscape designations will be taken as the starting point for the assessment, and the value of undesignated landscapes will also be assessed.



1.7.5 Table 1.4 sets out the relative importance of generic landscape designations and descriptions, identifying those designations applicable to the site and study area in the third column:

Table 1.1: Landscape Designations

Typical Designation	Description	Importance (Value)	Actual Designation Applicable to the Site and Surrounding Area
World Heritage Site	Unique sites, features or areas of international importance with settings of very high quality.	International (High)	None
National Park, AONB, Conservation Area, curtilage of Grade I, II and II* Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, Scheduled Monuments, Ancient Woodland	Sites, features or areas of national importance with settings of high quality.	National (High)	None
Special Landscape Areas, Areas of Great Landscape Value, Long distance footpaths	Sites, features or areas of regional importance with intact character.	Regional (High/ Medium)	None
Areas of Local Landscape Importance, Designated Public Open Space, Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)	Sites, features or areas of district importance.	District (Medium or Low)	None
Probably no designation, local public right of way	General countryside area valued at the local level.	Local (Medium/ or Low)	Public rights of way

1.7.6 Other factors which may influence landscape value are set out in Table 7.5, below:

Table 1.2: Factors Which Influence Landscape Value

Attribute	Criteria
Landscape Quality	Intactness or physical condition of the landscape or of the individual elements which contribute to landscape character.
Sense of Place	Aesthetic and perceptual qualities which create distinctiveness.



Attribute	Criteria
Scenic Quality	General appeal of the landscape to the senses.
Rarity	Rarity of landscape character areas, types or features.
Representativeness	Particular characteristic/feature/element considered an important example.
Cultural Interest	The presence of wildlife or cultural heritage interest which contributes positively to the landscape.
Recreation Value	Evidence that the landscape experience forms an important part of recreational activity, e.g. as established in guidebooks.
Associations	Relevant associations with notable figures, such as writers or artists, or events in history that contribute to landscape value.

1.7.7 Where appropriate, key individual components of the landscape, including particular features, notable aesthetic and perceptual qualities, were considered in terms of importance in their own right, including whether or not they can realistically be replaced. They were also judged on their contribution to the overall character and value of the wider landscape. For example, an intact landscape in good condition, where scenic quality, tranquillity, and/or cultural heritage features make a particular contribution to the landscape, or where there are important historical associations, is likely to be highly valued. Conversely, a degraded landscape in poor condition, with no particular scenic qualities or cultural interest is likely to be considered as low landscape value.

1.7.8 Susceptibility of landscape receptors to change arising from the proposed development was based upon the following criteria:

Table 1.3: Landscape Receptor Susceptibility to Change

Susceptibility	Criteria
High	Little ability to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline landscape and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.
Medium	Some ability to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline landscape and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.
Low	Substantial ability to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline landscape and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.

1.7.9 An overall assessment of sensitivity was made for each landscape receptor, based on a combined judgement of the above criteria, using the following typical scales:



Table 1.4: Landscape Sensitivity

Landscape Sensitivity	Description
High	<p>An area possessing a particularly distinctive sense of place and character, and / or attributes which make a particular contribution to the landscape or landscape character, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in good condition; • highly valued for its scenic quality; • highly valued for its landscape character; • an area with a low tolerance to change of the type proposed; • cultural heritage features or walks with cultural associations; • valued for contribution to recreational activity; • important cultural or historic associations; • irreplaceable landscape features or character; • part of a long distance footpath.
Medium	<p>An area with a clearly defined sense of place and character, and / or attributes which contribute to the landscape or landscape character, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in moderate condition; • some scenic quality valued at a local or regional level; • landscape character intact and valued at a local or regional level; • an area with partial tolerance to change of the type proposed; • may be undesignated landscape.
Low	<p>An area with a weak sense of place or poorly defined character, and / or attributes which make a contribution to the landscape or landscape character, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in poor condition; • no particular scenic qualities; • disjointed or weak landscape character; • contains a high level of discordant or detracting features; • no cultural interest; • an area that is tolerant of substantial change of the type proposed; • undesignated landscape; • a degraded landscape; • strongly influenced by detracting land uses and buildings.



MAGNITUDE OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

- 1.7.10 Development proposals can create either beneficial or adverse effects upon the landscape. However, the evaluation of the architectural design and appearance of buildings is a subjective issue, and one which does not form part of the LVIA. The assessment of landscape and visual effects is based on the scale and massing of proposed development and the consequential effects upon landscape, landscape character and people's views and visual amenity.
- 1.7.11 The magnitude of a landscape effect was assessed in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and degree of reversibility.
- 1.7.12 The size or scale of change in the landscape relates to the loss or addition of features in the landscape which are likely to result from the proposed development, and takes into account:
- The extent/proportion of landscape elements that are lost or added;
 - The contribution of those elements to landscape character and the degree to which aesthetic/perceptual aspects are altered; and
 - Whether the effect is likely to change the key characteristics of the landscape, which are critical to its distinctive character.
- 1.7.13 The following criteria were used to assess the size and scale of landscape effects, based on the degree of change that will occur as a result of the proposed development:

Table 1.5: Landscape Effects: Size/Scale of Change

Category	Criteria
Major adverse landscape effect	The proposals will result in a total change in the key characteristics of landscape character; will introduce elements totally uncharacteristic to the attributes of the receiving landscape such as its massing, scale, pattern and features; and/or will destroy or permanently degrade the integrity of landscape character; or is in total conflict with established planning objectives for landscape and visual elements of enhancement of the landscape; and/or result in a substantial or total loss, or alteration of key elements/features/characteristics.
Moderate adverse landscape effect	The proposals will result in a partial change in the key characteristics of landscape character; will introduce elements uncharacteristic to, out of scale or at odds with the attributes of the receiving landscape, such as its massing, scale, pattern and features; and/or will result in partial loss, or alteration of key elements/features/characteristics; or is in conflict with established planning objectives for landscape and visual elements of enhancement of the landscape.
Slight adverse landscape effect	The proposals will result in little change in the key characteristics of landscape character and will introduce elements that do not quite fit with the attributes of the receiving landscape such as its massing, scale, pattern and features; and/or will result in a minor loss or alteration of elements/features/characteristics; and/or contribute to degrading the landscape character.



Category	Criteria
Negligible adverse landscape effect	The proposals will result in a just discernible change to landscape character/elements/features/characteristics, which is not quite in keeping with the existing landscape and landscape character.
No change	The proposals will not cause any change to the landscape character/elements/features/characteristics.
Neutral effect	As a result of the proposals, there will be a change to the landscape elements/features/characteristics, but the change will be in keeping with, and complement, the existing landscape character such that the existing character is maintained and does not cause degradation or enhancement of the character.
Negligible landscape benefit	The proposals will result in a just discernible improvement to the landscape character/elements/characteristics, such as massing, scale, pattern or features.
Slight landscape benefit	The proposals will achieve a degree of fit with the landscape character/elements/features/characteristics and provides some enhancement to the condition or character of the landscape.
Moderate landscape benefit	The proposals will achieve a good fit with the landscape character/elements/features/characteristics, such as massing, scale, and pattern; or would noticeably improve the condition or character of the landscape and enhance characteristic features through the use of local materials; and/or support established planning objectives for landscape and visual elements of enhancement of the landscape.
Major landscape benefit	The proposals will totally accord with the landscape character/elements/features/characteristics, including scale, pattern, massing; or would restore, recreate or permanently enhance the condition or character of the landscape and enhance characteristic features through the use of local materials or planting; and/or delivers established planning objectives for landscape and visual elements of enhancement of the landscape.

1.8 ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS ON VIEWS AND VISUAL AMENITY

1.8.1 This assesses how the proposed development will affect the views available to people and their visual amenity. A methodical consideration of each visual effect upon each identified visual receptor was undertaken, in order to determine the significance of effects, in terms of:

- a. Value and susceptibility to change (sensitivity of the visual receptor, or viewer); and
- b. Size / scale, extent, composition, duration and reversibility (magnitude of the visual effect).

1.8.2 Visual receptors generally comprise users of public rights of way, public open spaces, public realm or other outdoor recreational facilities, and also travellers in vehicles who may be visiting, living or working within the study area, and their views at particular places.

1.8.3 The following terminology was used to describe the approximate distance between the representative viewpoint and the proposed development:



- a. Local: under 0.5km;
- b. Medium distance: 0.5km – 2km;
- c. Long distance: beyond 2km.

1.8.4 The type of view, and the number of viewers likely to experience the view, will be described in the following terms:

- a. Glimpsed (i.e. in passing) / Filtered / Oblique / Framed / Open Views; and
- b. Few / Moderate / Many Viewers.

1.8.5 No private viewpoints were assessed.

SENSITIVITY OF VISUAL RECEPTORS

1.8.6 The assessment of visual receptor sensitivity combined judgements on the value attributed to the visual receptor and the 'susceptibility to change' of the receptor to the specific type of development proposed.

1.8.7 The value assigned to views had regard to a number of factors, including:

- a. Recognition through planning or heritage assets; and
- b. The popularity of the viewpoint, its appearance in guidebooks, literature or art, on tourist maps, and the facilities provided to enable enjoyment of the view.

1.8.8 The criteria for the assessment of the value of views is summarised in the table below; note that these are provided for guidance and are not intended to be absolute.

Table 1.6: Value of Views

Value	Criteria
High	Views from landscapes/viewpoints of national importance, or highly popular visitor attractions where the view forms an important part of the experience, or with important cultural associations.
Medium	Views from landscapes/viewpoints of regional/district importance or moderately popular visitor attractions where the view forms part of the experience, or with local cultural associations.
Low	Views from landscapes/viewpoints with no designations, not particularly popular as a viewpoint and with minimal or no cultural associations.

1.8.9 The susceptibility of people to changes in views is a function of:

- a. The occupation or activity of the viewer at a given location; and
- b. The extent, therefore, to which a person's attention or interest may be focussed on a particular view and the visual amenity experienced.



1.8.10 For the purposes of the visual impact assessment, visual receptors' susceptibility to change was based upon the following table:

Table 1.7: Visual Receptor Susceptibility to Change

Susceptibility	Type of Receptor
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residents; - People engaged in outdoor recreation, including users of public rights of way, whose attention is likely to be focussed on the visual environment of the landscape and on particular views; - Visitors to heritage assets, landmarks or other attractions where views of the surroundings are an important part of the experience; - Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents; and - Travellers on scenic routes.
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes, where the view is moderately important to the quality of the journey (e.g. on a scenic route); - People using local parks, open spaces, public realm, or walking on streets or local public rights of way, with moderate interest in their visual environment.
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation, which does not involve appreciation of, or focus upon, views; - People at their place of work, where the landscape setting is not important to the quality of working life; and - Travellers, where the view is fleeting and incidental to the journey.

MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL EFFECTS

1.8.11 The magnitude of a visual effect was assessed in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and degree of reversibility.

1.8.12 The size or scale of change in the view relates to the degree of contrast to, or integration with, the visual composition, which is likely to result from the proposed development; and is influenced by the relative time over which a view is experienced and whether it is a full, partial or glimpsed view.

1.8.13 The following criteria were used to assess the size and scale of visual effects, based on the degree of change to the view or composition:

Table 1.8: Visual Effects: Size/Scale of Change

Category	Criteria
Major adverse or beneficial visual effect	The proposals will cause a dominant or complete change or contrast to the view, resulting from the loss or addition of features in the view and will substantially alter (degrade or enhance) the appreciation or composition of the view.



Moderate adverse or beneficial visual effect	The proposals will cause a clearly noticeable change or contrast to the view, which would have some effect on the composition, resulting from the loss or addition of features in the view and will noticeably alter (degrade or enhance) the appreciation of the view.
Slight adverse or beneficial visual effect	The proposals will cause a perceptible change or contrast to the view, but which would not materially affect the composition or the appreciation of the view.
Negligible adverse or beneficial visual effect	The proposals will cause a barely perceptible change or contrast to the view, which would not affect the composition or the appreciation of the view.
No change	The proposals will maintain the existing view and cause no change to the view.
Neutral	There will be a change to the composition of the view, but the change will be entirely in keeping with the existing elements of the view and maintain the composition of the existing view.

1.9 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL MITIGATION MEASURES

1.9.1 Measures proposed for preventing/avoiding, reducing or, where possible, offsetting or compensating for significant adverse landscape or visual effects were described. However, they were not taken into account in the assessment of effects.

1.10 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

1.10.1 Significance of landscape and visual effects vary with the location, landscape context and type of proposed development.

1.10.2 The significance of landscape and visual effects was determined from a combination of the receptor sensitivity and the magnitude of effects, as set out in the following table:

Table 1.9: Assessment of Significance of Landscape and Visual Effects

Sensitivity of Receptor	Major Effect	Moderate Effect	Slight Effect	Negligible Effect	Neutral Effect
High	Severe Significance	Major Significance	Moderate Significance	Minor Significance	Not Significant
Medium	Major Significance	Moderate Significance	Minor Significance	Not Significant	Not Significant
Low	Moderate Significance	Minor Significance	Minor Significance	Not Significant	Not Significant

1.10.3 The above table has regard to guidance in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, (3rd Edition, 2013), at paragraph 5.56, page 92 (significance of landscape effects) and paragraph 6.44, page 116 (significance of visual effects).



1.10.4 For the purposes of the LVIA, 'Moderately Significant' effects are also considered as significant, but to a lesser degree than (wholly) 'Significant' effects.



2 LANDSCAPE EFFECTS AND VISUAL EFFECTS TABLES



3 APPENDIX A: VIEWPOINT LOCATION PLAN AND PHOTOGRAPHS
