Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

for

Claydon Marina

on behalf of

W A Adams Partnership

February 2019

thelandscapepartnership
planning and designing environments for life

Quality Control

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for

Claydon Marina

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The Landscape Partnership Ltd is a practice of Chartered Landscape Architects, Chartered Ecologists and Chartered Environmentalists, registered with the Landscape Institute and a member of the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment & the Arboricultural Association

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of W A Adams Partnership by The Landscape Partnership to assess the suitability of the proposed marina development near Claydon (hereafter referred to as the 'Site'), in relation to the effects it would have on the landscape character and features of the Site, the local and wider landscape character and changes to views.

1.2 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) provides a description of: the existing landscape and built features within the Site and immediate vicinity; the key characteristics of the local landscape character and how these relate to the Site; the contribution that these features have within views; and the presence of statutory or local landscape related designations. In defining 'landscape' reference is made to the adopted definition agreed by the European Landscape Convention (Florence: Council of Europe 2000), which states that the landscape is '*an area, as perceived by people whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*'.

1.3 The assessment will also set out the following:

- the loss or damage to landscape and built features and the perceived change to the character of the landscape resulting from the proposed development;
- the capacity of the landscape to accommodate the proposed type of development;
- the extent to which the development would be visible; and
- where visible, assessing how the view would change in relation to a range of visual receptors.

1.4 A full planning application (Ref No: 18/00904/F) was submitted on 21 May 2018 for the *'formation of inland waterways marina with ancillary facilities building, car parking, access and associated landscaping including the construction of a new lake'*. This included the LVIA prepared in April 2018. As part of the assessment process, prior to submission, the following consultation and agreements were made:

- TLP contacted the Landscape Services at Cherwell District & South Northants Council (CDSNC) on 13 March 2017, advising that an LVIA would be undertaken for the proposed development. TLP set out that this would be undertaken following the principles of GLVIA3 and would provide Representative Viewpoints from a range of geographical locations and represent different visual receptors, including Oxford Canal, long distance walks, adjacent settlements and roads. Tim Screen (Landscape Officer) of CDSNC replied on 3 April 2017 advising that this provided a good starting point and that TLP should proceed on this basis, whilst ensuring that viewpoints were provided from both of the districts of Cherwell and South Northants. Accordingly, this formed part of the LVIA.

1.5 The submitted scheme has now been amended following subsequent comments received from statutory consultees and comments from the planning officer at Cherwell and South Northamptonshire Councils. The proposals have consequently been revised to incorporate the following main changes:

- reduced size marina;
- reduced size of boat yard and wet docks (maintenance and service bays);
- reduced car park;
- the proposed marina has a large offset from Boddington Road (approximately 70m) and corresponding large increase in proposed woodland within the northern part of the Site;
- reduction in the size of the proposed building, and modifications to the proposed elevations; and
- changes to the towpath bridge, with Geobags now hidden behind a grassed earth embankment.

1.6 The LVIA has also been updated to reflect these changes and the effects of these changes on the landscape and visual receptors, as well as to respond to additional requirements requested by the Landscape Officer and Planning Officer. This includes the following: assessment of two additional viewpoints (Viewpoints 13 and 14) from the Oxford Canal towpath at the point of the proposed entrance to the marina, and from the Public Footpath 170/3 immediately to the south-west of the Site; effects during the construction period; and identification and assessment of effects of any viewpoints where there would be a cumulative effect from the proposed development and the current HS2 proposals.

1.7 The Landscape Officer also made comment with regard to the effects on views from Boddington Road, agreeing with the LVIA that the proposed embankment (within the originally submitted scheme) on the western Site boundary would be visually intrusive. However, there is a disagreement with the assessment of the sensitivity of the visual receptors at Viewpoint 3 and 4. This would have a corresponding increase in the level of significance of effect. The Landscape Officer commented as follows *'this harm been misrepresented in the Visual assessment of VP 3 Road User with an overall visual sensitivity rating of low. My judged rating is medium (adverse) but a high (adverse) for walker/visual receptors using the road. The effect on roadside receptors as one drives southwards on Boddington Road is going to be drastic once past the large hedgerow on the northern boundary (this is acknowledged in the first paragraph on page 19 of the LVIA). The view of the Clubhouse and car parking is going to be quite harmful. Again, the low rating of viewpoint 4 is a mis-representation. The most realistic ratings is overall visual sensitivity of high (adverse)'*. There would appear to be agreement between ourselves and the Landscape Officer regarding the magnitude of impact i.e. High that the proposals would have, but there is a difference of opinion with sensitivity of the visual receptor to change for both viewpoints. TLP advise that visual receptors would be largely limited to the intermittent passing road user, and therefore low sensitivity. However, the Landscape Officer considers

that Viewpoints 3 and 4 should be assessed on the basis of a walker i.e. high sensitivity. We do not agree with this judgement. This would not be representative of the typical visual receptor using Boddington Road. Whilst it may be possible that Boddington Road is very occasionally used by walkers, this is not the intended purpose of the road and has not been designed to safely allow pedestrians to walk along the road. The road is narrow, particularly at the bridge crossing, which would discourage its use as a route for safely walking along the road. There is no footway adjoining the road carriageway or a sufficiently wide verge that would allow someone to safely walk adjacent to the carriageway. Boddington Road does not form part of any long distance footpath routes and there is no intended access off the Oxford Canal towpath to enable access to the bridge i.e. the towpath passes beneath the bridge. Consequently, we do not consider that the Landscape Officer's comments are justified, and we stand by our original judgements.

2 METHDOLOGY AND ASSUMPTIONS

2.1 In order to understand how landscape features, landscape character and views would be affected, the assessment uses an objective approach based on the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (GLVIA3)[1]. The detailed application of these Guidelines, the criteria and categories used, and the assumptions and limitations applied are set out in Appendix 1, Methodology. Where required this is identified and the reasons for the variation explained. The assessment approach determines the significance of the changes to the landscape and views, should the proposed development proceed. This is achieved by first understanding the relative sensitivity of the character of the landscape and the view being experienced and then combining this with the magnitude or extent of change that would result from the proposed development. Changes can be experienced as an adverse, beneficial or neutral influence. Other considerations are also taken into account such as seasonal variation, direct or indirect effects and comparison of effects in the first year following completion and after a period of 15 years once any planting has established. The GLVIA advises that level of detail provided should be to a reasonable level sufficient to determine the likely significant effects. This should be '*appropriate and proportional to the scale and type of development and the type and significance of the landscape and visual effects likely to occur'* (paragraph 3.16).

Assumptions and Limitations

2.2 The following assumptions have been made in respect to the assessment of effects:

- the assessment Baseline Year is 2018;
- the assessment is based on Drawing Number: A05/015A, Proposed Site Plan; A05/020A, Proposed Site Plan; A05/021A, Proposed Landscaping; A05/022A, Proposed Levels Plan; A05/100C Site

[1] Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 3rd Edition, April 2013

Marina Sections; A05/405A Proposed Building; A05/601B Towpath Bridge; and A05/105B Site/Yard Sections; and ADAMCM-1-1-002/A Trees & Hedgerow Removal Plan.

- the proposed development is regarded as being permanent in landscape and visual terms due to the length of operation. The proposed development would involve a permanent loss of existing Site features and would be difficult to reverse;
- existing vegetation will continue to grow at rates appropriate to the location, species and maturity of the vegetation;
- the proposed tree planting would grow at a rate of approximately 300mm/year and the proposed shrubs/hedge planting at approximately 400mm/year, based on the average expected growth rates for the selected species growing on slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils with a moderate fertility. Predicted growth is also based on the assumption that no growth will take place in the first year, as the plants adjust to their new growing environments;
- the receptor for a view from public rights of way, public open space and within a residential property is an adult standing with an eye height of 1.6m;
- visual effects are assessed on the basis of good visibility. Visual effects can be expected to vary e.g. poor visibility at times of low cloud, rainfall and dusk. At these times a reduction in visual clarity, colour and contrast would be experienced. Reduced visibility would limit the extent of view possible particularly from mid to long distance views. Consequently, the assessment of effects is based on the worst case scenario, where the proposed development would be most visible; and
- extent of use of public rights of way is based on: known information e.g. if the right of way forms part of a promoted route at a local or national level, way-marking and signage; and circumstantial evidence at the time of the survey, e.g. recent disturbance of grass and crops, a clearly defined path, extent of wear, and the number of people using the right of way at the time of the survey. The extent of use of a road is based on the number of vehicles observed using the road at the time of the survey and as could reasonably be expected for the class of road.

2.3 In undertaking the assessment, other than the Site, private property has not been assessed from the property itself, as it is generally considered impractical to seek approval to gain access to residential properties or other buildings to assess the effect on views from each window in a property or adjoining land. Assessment is therefore based on the nearest publicly accessible location, which will usually be a road or public right of way or from views within the Site looking outwards. Professional judgement is therefore required as to what the likely effect on views would be from windows, making allowances for changes in height e.g. from a first floor window.

3 SITE LOCATION

3.1 This is located within the northern corner of the district of Cherwell, approximately 8 kms north of the town of Banbury, and approximately 640m north-east of the village of Claydon (refer to Appendix 3, Figure 01). The small villages of Lower Boddington and Aston le Walls respectively lie approximately 1.7 kms to the north-east and 2.5 kms east of the Site. The proposed marina would be located immediately to the north of the Oxford Canal, a 126 kms long canal that links Oxford with Coventry, and connects the River Thames to the Grand Union Canal and Coventry Canal. The Oxford Canal forms a long meandering boundary to the south-west of the Site. The long north-eastern Site boundary is formed by the former Stratford-Upon-Avon & Midland Junction Railway, which is now disused. The short western Site boundary is defined by the unclassified road of Boddington Road, with south-eastern boundary shared with adjoining fields of pasture.

Designations

3.2 The Site is not located within any landscape or visually related statutory or local designation. There are landscape designations and related heritage designations within the wider and local context of the Site (refer to Appendix 3, Figures 02 and 04). These are set out in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Designations

Designation	Importance	Distance (closest point)
Special Landscape Area (Daventry District Council)	District	3.2 kms
Ironstone Hill Special Landscape Area (Stratford-Upon-Avon District)	District	410 m
Farnborough Hall Registered Park and Garden	National	2.5 kms
9 Grade II Listed Buildings in Claydon	District	900 m
Church of St James the Great, Claydon (Grade II*)	National	950 m
Listed Building: Field Bridge Number 145, Over Oxford Canal (Grade II)	District	800 m
Listed Building: Oxford Canal Boundary Lift Bridge (Grade II)	District	750 m

4 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES

National

4.1 Natural England has divided England into 159 distinct National Character Areas that define the landscape at a national scale. The Site lies within the NCA 95 Northamptonshire Uplands (refer to Appendix 2). The NCA sets out Statements of Environmental Opportunities (SEO). SEO1 encourages the protection, management and promotion of historic and archaeological features, including canals, to conserve a sense of history and place, provide enjoyment and increase understanding, and enhance recreation opportunities. SEO2 and SEO3 incorporate the promotion of conserving and enhancing semi-natural habitats and multifunctional green infrastructure networks, creating strong ecological and recreational networks, such as canals. Relevant key characteristics include: gently rolling rounded hills and valleys, with long low ridgelines and wide far-reaching views from the edges of ridgetops; pockets of semi-natural vegetation and scattered small broadleaved woods and copses; open arable farmland contrasts with permanent pasture; mainly rectangular, enclosed field patterns with distinctive high hedgerows of hawthorn and blackthorn, with ask and oak trees; dense network of narrow lanes crossed by many strategic road and railway corridors and the Oxford Canal; nucleated villages often on hill tops or at valley heads; and many historic houses, parks and gardens, and long distances paths and Oxford Canal that provide well used recreation assets.

District

4.2 There are several landscape character assessments at a district scale that cover the Site and adjoining wider landscape, due to the Site's location close to the boundaries of four districts: Cherwell; South Northants; Daventry; and Stratford-on-Avon. South Northants and Daventry are covered by the Northamptonshire Current Landscape Character Assessment (NCLCA)[2] and Cherwell by the Cherwell District Landscape Character Assessment (CDLCA)[3]. These Assessments provide a detailed level of landscape character assessment, at a sufficiently appropriate scale to understand what the effects of the proposed development would be on the local and wider landscape. Accordingly, both Assessments describe the Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) that cover the Site and neighbouring landscapes (refer to Appendix 3, Figure 03), and what the effects of the proposed development would be on these landscapes. CDLCA is now somewhat dated, so TLP have reviewed the relevant LCA covering the Site as part of undertaking this LVIA, and consider that characteristics described are still broadly applicable at the time of assessment.

4.3 Within Stratford-on-Avon the assessment of landscape character is covered by the Avon Landscape Guidelines study, based on the Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines, published in November 1993. This is now a dated study. A further outline description of landscape character is also included within the

[2] Northamptonshire Current Landscape Character Assessment, River Nene Regional Park, 2006
[3] Cherwell District Landscape Character Assessment, Cobham Resource Consultants for Cherwell District Council, November 1995

Stratford-on-Avon District Design Guide, April 2001. As part of the preparation of this LVIA, the landscape covered by both studies was assessed and it was determined the proposed development would not affect the landscapes covered by these guides. Consequently, given the age of the studies and not being considered to be a material consideration, a description and assessment of the relevant character areas and types is not incorporated as part of this LVIA. A further study was undertaken by White Consultants, in association with Steven Warnock, on behalf of Stratford-on-Avon District Council in June 2012, entitled Special Landscape Areas Study. This provided an assessment of former Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) and guidance on the creation of candidate SLAs. The study utilised Landscape Description Units (LDUs), which were available at the time, providing a representation of Landscape Types in specific locations. The LDUs extended into the adjoining counties of Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire, so where relevant these are referred to. The study is also referred to, due to the recommendation to retain the SLAs as local landscape designations, through the creation of candidate SLAs (primarily retention of former SLAs, but with modified boundaries). These are now covered by Policy CS.12 of the Stratford-on-Avon Core Strategy 2011-2031, July 2016. The nearest SLA is Ironstone Hill Fringe (refer to Figure 02 and Table 3.1).

4.4 The relevant characteristics and landscape strategies that relate to the Site, are set out below.

Table 4.1: Landscape Character

Landscape Character Area	Relevant Key Characteristics, Condition & Sensitivity, and Guidelines	Landscape Sensitivity: Value	Landscape Sensitivity: Susceptibility to Change: Canal Marina	Overall Landscape Sensitivity
Cherwell District Landscape Character Assessment				
Upper Cherwell Basin	LCA Upper Cherwell Basin is comprised of a number of Landscape Types. The Site is located within the largest of the type, that of R1b: Flat Low Lying Open Wet Pasture. The key characteristics of the LCA are as follows: ◆ Gently sloping valley sides formed by the River Cherwell and its tributaries. Landform rises to heights of 150m. ◆ Poorly drained clay soils have restricted agricultural activity to pastoral farming. Open expanses of rather bleak pasture, punctuated by isolated villages and farmsteads. ◆ Medium or large fields, with very regular fields formed as part of the parliamentary enclosures. Fields bound by trimmed hawthorn hedges. However, there is a steady decline in hedgerows, with many field boundaries being replaced with post & wire/rail fences. ◆ Few isolated hedgerow oaks and a number of willows along watercourses form important features within the open landscape. ◆ Remote, rural character, despite proximity to Banbury and the M40. ◆ Oxford Canal forms an important feature and spine through the area, steadily climbing to its highest point at the top of a series of locks at Claydon. A number of steep hump-backed brick bridges form prominent features along the canal. <u>Landscape Strategy</u> ◆ The LCA is evaluated as being a mixture of Landscape Types requiring 'Conservation' and 'Repair'. The Landscape Type R1B (location of the Site) is assessed as 'Repair'. This includes repairing the weakening hedgerow and hedgerow trees, strengthening or replacement of traditional landscape features. Hedgerows should have good management, removal should be resisted, and hedgerow trees should be renewed, with new trees planted being appropriate to the character of the area. ◆ Guidance is provided in relation to 'Repair' landscapes, that advises: *'development in these areas must be sensitively sited, designed and integrated to ensure that the rural, unspoilt character of the landscape is maintained. However, precisely because their existing structure is so strong, these landscapes should be able to absorb limited areas of sensitive development'*.	Medium	Medium	Medium

Landscape Character Area	Relevant Key Characteristics, Condition & Sensitivity, and Guidelines	Landscape Sensitivity: Value	Landscape Sensitivity: Susceptibility to Change: Canal Marina	Overall Landscape Sensitivity
Northamptonshire Current Landscape Character Assessment				
LCA 19a Boddington Vale Farmland	• LCA 19a forms a constituent of the broader LCT 19: Broad Unwooded Vale. The LCA is typical of the key characteristics of the LCT i.e. rural, open, sparsely populated landscape of pasture and arable land, bound by low clipped hedgerows partly in decline, long distance views, and evident significant communication routes and infrastructure elements. • Broad flat landscape, characterised by a combination of arable and pastoral farmland. Variable field size, but predominantly medium to large. • Extremely limited woodland cover, although small linear coniferous copses are present. Overgrown hedgerows, occasional hedgerow trees, poplars along the disused railway, and trees along access tracks, provide some additional cover. • The surrounding hills and valleys provide an elevated backdrop to the vale landscape. • Canal feeders, streams and Boddington Reservoir are features of the landscape. • Settlement is sparse, with the only village being that of Little Boddington, with the outer edges of Upper Boddington visible on the horizon. Scattered farms and dwellings are also present. • Access is limited to a small number of minor roads and public footpaths. • The landscape of LCT 19 is well maintained, but the strength of character diminishes, where hedgerows become gappy or overgrown. Development of significant man made features has had a significant impact on the landscape. <u>Landscape Strategy for LCT 19</u>: • New development should be controlled and encouraged to retain the quiet and simple rural character of the LCT. • Conserve the broad scale and simple palette of characteristics within the landscape. • Tree cover along canals and roads is an important feature and should be conserved and enhanced, where possible. • The hedgerow network and should be retained and enhanced to strength their visual and biodiversity contribution to the landscape.	Medium	Medium	Medium

Landscape Character Area	Relevant Key Characteristics, Condition & Sensitivity, and Guidelines	Landscape Sensitivity: Value	Landscape Sensitivity: Susceptibility to Change: Canal Marina	Overall Landscape Sensitivity
LCT 16: LCA 16a Boddington Hills	• LCA 16a is the only character area of LCT 16: Low Pastoral Hills and thus key characteristics of the LCT are the same as the LCA, which are set out below. • Low lying broad hills with long distance views into the neighbouring county and LCT 19. • Predominance of improved pastures with pockets of calcareous grassland, with evidence of arable farmland. • Limited woodland, though numerous hedgerow trees are evident. • Sparse settlement, consisting of occasional small villages and isolated farms and villages. • Network of minor roads linking settlements and recreational opportunities confined to the public rights of way network. • Overall the landscape is well maintained, but the strength of character diminishes, where hedgerows become gappy and post and wire fences are prevalent. <u>Landscape Strategy for LCT 16</u> • New development should be controlled and encouraged to conserve and enhance the simple pastoral qualities of the quiet and rural character of the LCT. • Conserve the expansive character and long distance views across the Warwickshire vale landscape from the upper slopes and crests of the low hills.	High	Medium	High

5 SITE LANDSCAPE FEATURES

5.1 The Site is a large open arable field, with small pockets of grassland and wide grass field edges (refer to Appendix 3, Figure 05). The Site is contained by: tall mature hedgerows and trees along the boundaries with the Oxford Canal and disused railway to the south and north; fragmented sections of hedge and groups of trees/scrub along Boddington Road along the western boundary and; a continuous hedge of variable height along the convoluted eastern boundary. The Site is not particularly typical of the surrounding landscape characterised by the district scale LCAs, which is more open and pastoral in character. However, it does reflect the identified presence of overgrown hedgerows and trees along canals, roads and disused railways forming distinctive features that are noted to be present within LCA 19a. The lowland location of the Site and the extent of mature vegetation along its boundaries, gives the Site a strong sense of enclosure that contrasts with the wider context of the Site.

Table 5.1: Site Landscape Features

Site Feature	Description	Landscape Sensitivity: Value	Landscape Sensitivity: Susceptibility to Change: Canal Marina	Overall Landscape Sensitivity
Landform	◆ The land falls from high point, along the central part of southern edge of the Site at a height of approximately 115m, to the north and east to a low point of approximately 108m AOD on the eastern edge of the Site. ◆ Despite the lowland location of the Site, the changes in level are nevertheless an evident feature of the Site, and consequently would be evidently susceptible to change from the creation of marina.	Low	Medium	Low
Vegetation	◆ Tall, continuous, mature hedgerows, with hedgerow trees along the canal, becoming more fragmented along western boundary, and lower along the eastern boundary. The northern boundary forms part of a wide mature hedgerow and belt of 6-7m high scrub and large groups of trees of 12-16m height that has colonised the former railway corridor. This extends out into a triangular area of scrub and trees to the north-west of the Site. Hedgerows are mainly in good condition. ◆ Whilst not particular of the character of the surrounding landscape, as identified within LCA 19a, overgrown hedgerows and trees form a distinctive and important feature. ◆ Hedgerows are key characteristic of the surrounding landscape and form a valuable site feature.	High	Medium	High
Grassland & Aquatic Vegetation	◆ There is currently no aquatic vegetation with the Site, and only small pocket of grassland within the east of the Site.	Medium	Medium	Medium
Land Use	◆ Farmland, primarily arable, with some pockets of grassland.	Low	High	Medium
Access	◆ There is no public access on the land.	Medium	Medium	Medium

6 VIEWS

6.1 Views of the Site are represented by a number of viewpoints from a range of geographical locations and receptor types. These are demonstrative of the typical views within the local and wider context of the Site, taken from key locations, where the proposed development would potentially have the greatest influence on a view. The location of the Representative Viewpoints are shown on Figures 02 and 04 in Appendix 3, and the nature of the view and the sensitivity of the visual receptors to change are described below in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Viewpoints: Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

View & Location	Receptor Type	Description	Visual Sensitivity: Value	Visual Sensitivity: Susceptibility to Change: Canal Marina	Overall Visual Sensitivity
Viewpoint 1: Clayton Toplock	Walker & Narrow Boat User	Well used towpath and canal. Lock gates, and associated brick buildings. View along the canal towards the Site. Brick hump-back bridge in the mid-distance, with trees beyond demarcating the south-eastern edge of the Site. Berry Hill and ridge between Upper Boddington and Lower Boddington form distance features on the skyline.	Medium	High	High
Viewpoint 2: Oxford Canal Towpath	Walker & Narrow Boat User	Tranquil rural setting to well used canal and towpath. Open pastoral farmland to the left of the view. Tall mature hedgerow and trees form a strong containing feature to the right of the view.	Medium	High	High
Viewpoint 3: Boddington Road Bridge	Road User	Occasionally used narrow road. Oblique view when coming over the bridge provides relatively extensive view along Oxford Canal and the Site. Rural context, comprising arable fields, contained by continuous hedges and scattered hedgerow trees. Trees and tall hedgerow along the canal, and associated with the more distant disused railway, form a distinctive feature in an otherwise largely open landscape. Warden Hill and the Upper Boddington ridgeline.	Low	Medium	Low
Viewpoint 4: Boddington Road	Road User	Occasionally used narrow road leading up to bridge crossing of the Oxford Canal. View largely contained by mature hedgerow and scrub, with break to the left of the view, allowing framed view into the Site.	Low	Medium	Low
Viewpoint 5: Public Footpath AC1	Walker	Footpath shows indication of limited use, with little evidence of a defined path. Styles in poor condition. View across small pasture field on the edge of the disused railway. Tall hedge on the south-eastern Site boundary contains views beyond the foreground. The density of hedge, even in winter, largely prevents views beyond the hedge, with the Site's arable field being barely discernible.	Low	High	Medium
Viewpoint 6: Public Footpath AC1	Walker	Footpath shows indication of limited use, with little evidence of a defined path. Stiles in poor condition. Viewpoint lies to the south of Springfield Farm over large open field of pasture. Tall hedgerows and trees along the disused railway, contain views in the mid-distance and largely define the horizon. Claydon is just visible as a very distant feature.	Low	High	Medium
Viewpoint 7: Unclassified Road	Road User	Oblique view along occasionally used narrow lane. Field access provides opening within existing hedge along the road, allowing views towards the Site.	Low	Medium	Low

View & Location	Receptor Type	Description	Visual Sensitivity: Value	Visual Sensitivity: Susceptibility to Change: Canal Marina	Overall Visual Sensitivity
		Moderate sized field of pasture extending to trimmed continuous hedges near to and along the south-eastern Site boundary. Rural character, defined by the agricultural landscape, and hedges and trees along field boundaries and disused railway.			
Viewpoint 8: Unclassified Road	Road User	Occasionally used narrow lane, near to the village of Claydon. On leaving the village the lane drops to the lower ground, allowing long distance views to the front of the viewer that extend towards Aston le Walls. Dense continuous hedge along the lane contains views, but allowing partial views over the top of the hedge when trimmed in winter. Views towards the Site form a peripheral and oblique part of the view, curtailed by the road hedge.	Low	Medium	Low
Viewpoint 9: Public Footpath 170/3	Walker	Waymarked route, but lack of evidence indicating frequent use. Proximity to Claydon and panoramic nature of the view, mean that it is likely to be locally valued. Panoramic view over adjoining pastoral and arable farmland north of Claydon. Backdrop and horizon to view is formed by Berry Hill and Upper Boddington ridgeline. Tall hedgerow along Oxford Canal and the southern Site boundary, is visible beyond the hedge in the mid-distance.	Medium	High	High
Viewpoint 10: Ducketts Lane, Farborough	Road User	Infrequently used road to the north of Farnborough. Extensive panoramic view on leaving Farnborough and descending the hill to the A4323. View across arable and pastoral farmland with the lowland, with hills and ridgelines forming the distant horizon. Predominantly open landscape, but with evident presence of continuous hedges and scattered hedgerow trees. The village of Claydon is a discernible feature on a hillock, set in front of the more distant horizon. Tall hedgerows along Oxford Canal form a discernible part of the view, but form a distant feature that blends with the broader scene of hedgerows within the lowland. The canal itself is not distinguishable feature.	Medium	Medium	Medium
Viewpoint 11: Macmillan Way & Public Footpath 323/1a	Walker	Evidence of moderate use, although farmer's management of the land makes access more difficult. Forms part of the Macmillan Way, and access to valley top and panoramic view over the surrounding landscape. Extensive view across the adjoining lowland landscape. Tall trees in the mid-distance, partly curtail the view. Mixed arable and pastoral farmland with well defined field boundaries, with a mixture of tall and low hedges. Trees form a notable feature of the view.	Medium	High	High

View & Location	Receptor Type	Description	Visual Sensitivity: Value	Visual Sensitivity: Susceptibility to Change: Canal Marina	Overall Visual Sensitivity
Viewpoint 12: Hill Road	Road User	Panoramic open view from infrequently used road and footway between Upper Boddington and Lower Boddington. Wide extensive view across the surrounding lowland landscape. Primarily pastoral landscape, with well defined regular field pattern. Evident presence of trees, particularly closer to the viewer. Strong rural landscape setting with very little evidence of settlements or notable distinguishable features. Cohesive and scenic composition of landscape features.	Medium	Medium	Medium
Viewpoint 13: Oxford Canal Towpath	Walker & Narrow Boat User	Tranquil rural setting to well used canal and towpath. Towpath contained by a tall mature hedgerow, preventing views into the Site. View along canal curtailed by Hay Bridge (Boddington Road crossing), and mature trees and hedges adjacent to the canal. Open arable field to the left of the view. Tall mature hedgerow and trees form a strong continuous feature along Boddington Road to the left of the view. View experienced for a short length of the towpath. To the east, the towpath follows a curve, in which the mature hedgerow along the northern edge of the towpath largely prevents views of this section of towpath and canal. Likewise, Hay Bridge to the west largely prevents views of this section, when the viewer is on the towpath west of the bridge.	Medium	High	High
Viewpoint 14: Public Footpath 170/3	Walker	Footpath shows indication of limited use, with limited evidence of a defined path. Styles in poor condition. View to the north-west overlooking the Site, immediately after/prior to crossing canal bridge. Open panoramic view over the recently flailed hedge, across the adjoining small arable field to the large arable field that forms the Site. The low hedge along the eastern Site boundary, provides little curtailment of the view. More distant views are largely contained by the mature tree and shrub belt along the northern Site boundary, that forms part of the disused railway line. Skyline is formed by the elevated ground to the north, including Berry Hill and the location of Upper Boddington. View is representative of a relatively short section of footpath between the canal bridge immediately to the south-west and the tall hedge along the far eastern Site boundary, adjacent to Viewpoint 5.	Low	High	Medium

7 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

7.1 The proposed development would incorporate the following main elements:

- marina with 192 berths for narrow boats;

- connection and access off Oxford Canal, with towpath maintained as a connection through the creation of towpath bridge with ramped access either side of bridge. Traditional canal style bridge, with brick abutments, metal post and 3 or 4 rail railing;
- 4m wide clay dam which encircles the entire marina basin, with associated earthworks to create gentle gradient slopes to the west, and moderate gradient slopes to the north and east. The clay dam will finish at +115.5, 450mm above marina/canal water level. There would be an equal balance of cut and fill i.e. not net gain or loss of material within the Site;
- maintenance and service bays and boat yard within the western part of the marina;
- mixed single and two storey proposed building within the western part of the marina. Built using a traditional canal style, with random coursed stone walls, timber weather boarding, and slate tile pitched roof. The maximum height of the building would be 7.9m;
- two way access road, linking to gated vehicular entrance off Boddington Road. This would circum-navigate the marina, at the base of the dam embankment to the north of the proposed marina, with the road rising to the higher ground to the south of the Site. Along this road would be located a number of small parking areas, and a larger area of parking bays to the south-east of the Site, corresponding with the location of marina berths. Five loading/unloading points, and three elsans would also be provided along the access road. The access road would be constructed in loose stone;
- parallel to the access road, a further single way road would be provided on the top of the embankment to the north and east of the marina, connecting with the two way access road to the south-east of the Site. The road would be constructed in stone, with frequent passing bays, and concrete footpath connections provided between the passing bays, at the upper level, to the parking bays at the lower level. Three equally spaced elsans would also be provided along the higher single way road. A low bund and shrub planting would be used along the outer edge of the road to provide screening for vehicles;
- car park for 24 vehicles would located to the north-west of the Site, adjacent to the proposed building, and would be constructed in loose stone;
- sections of concrete footpath would be provided immediately adjacent to the banks of jetties enabling access to timber stages and the moored narrow boats;
- a peninsula with no public access would be created within the centre of the marina, with clumps of native tree and shrub planting, and a shallow water fringe with planted native marginal aquatics created along the northern edge of the island. This would be designed to create an area of wildlife value and suitable location for nesting of water fowl. Marginal aquatics would also be planted around the other margins of the marina to provide predominantly soft edges;

- clumps and belts of native tree and shrub planting and woodland would be created around the marina to integrate the proposed development into the local landscape setting, and provide additional habitats, wildlife corridors, characteristic landscape features, and visual interest. All species would be indigenous and include vegetation types typical this part of Oxfordshire;
- an elongated and organically shaped irrigation lake would be located to the east of the Site, with shallow areas provided at three points to allow marginal aquatics to grow and provide wildlife interest. The lake would be used to excavate sufficient material to form the marina dam and embankments, as well as to create a water source for irrigation within the adjoining farm; and
- peripheral areas of grass within the Site would be fenced off and grazed by sheep.

8 CONSTRUCTION PHASE

8.1 The following aspects would form part of the construction works.

- Construction would primarily involve earthworks to create the marina and lake. The proposals involve an equal balance of cut and fill, so no material needs to be imported or spoil exported.
- The earthworks to construct the basin, dam and lake will be undertaken in spring or summer and will take approximately 3 months to complete. The earth moving plant will involve the following: three caterpillar D8 dozers dozers; one D6 dozer; one 20 tonne excavator; two 30 tonne dumpers; and one sheepsfoot roller. See images below.


Caterpillar D8 Doser


D6 Doser


20 Tonne Excavator

30 Tonne Dumper


Sheepsfoot Roller

- The proposed building will be constructed following the completion and signing off of the dam. It is anticipated that the building would take approximately 6 months to complete.

- The construction of roads, parking, jetties, services and fencing and would take approximately 12 months using small machinery i.e. a 15 tonne excavator or JCB with front bucket and backhoe, and a small dumper.
- Movement of construction vehicles. All vehicles used during the construction phase, will access the Site from Springfield Farm. It is expected that plant/machinery would be stored on Site or at Springfield Farm.
- Works associated with the implantation of the landscape scheme. Landscape works would be mainly undertaken in the winter following the completion of the earthworks and infrastructure works.
- The construction of the proposed development would be carried out during normal working hours from Monday to Saturday. No construction works would be carried out during the night time, therefore lighting impacts during construction would be limited.

8.2 The construction phase would be temporary, occurring over a relatively short time period, with all earthwork material retained within the Site, and minimal movement of construction vehicles on and off Site. Stockpiling of materials would be kept within the Site boundary and in a visually discreet location. Tree protection zones would be fenced off to ensure that development would not encroach onto the root protection areas of retained vegetation. Existing trees and hedges would be protected in accordance with BS 5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction. Construction lighting would be shielded, where possible, and directed downwards to minimise light pollution.

8.3 The main influence of the construction works arise from the earthworks and the movement of machinery over a three month period. This would have a major intrusive effect within the landscape of the Site and immediately adjacent to the Site, and where there are open views into the Site. The latter occurs next to the Site boundaries i.e. Viewpoints 3, 4, 13 and 14. The mature hedge along the Oxford Canal would prevent views of the construction works from Viewpoint 2, but noise of machinery/plant would be apparent. A similar situation would occur at Viewpoint 5, where the existing hedge would largely prevent views of the construction works, although earth moving plant would be visible above the hedge when working on the top of the raised landform to form the dam and embankments. The construction works would be much less evident from other more distant locations, due to the influence of distance and intervening vegetation and, whilst intrusive, would have limited effects on views and the landscape.

8.4 Whilst there would be some very localised significant adverse effects during the construction phase, this would be temporary, occurring over a short time period, mainly during the 3 months of earthworks.

9 EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES

9.1 Refer to Appendix 3 and Figure 03. The effects of the proposed development are set out in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1: Effects on Landscape Character Areas

LCA	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 - Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance
Cherwell District Landscape Character Assessment												
Upper Cherwell Basin	**Medium**	• The proposed development would directly affect the LCA, but would have limited effect on the key characteristics of the LCA. • The proposals would be harmonious with the rural character of the LCA. The marina would result in an increase of activity within this part of the Oxford Canal. The extent of activity would be expected to be seasonal, particularly during the summer months. Some increased level of noise could be expected during these periods. Nevertheless, the proposed development is in keeping with the rural character, involving predominantly quiet and gentle leisure activity, together with a traditional canal working environment. • As the development is confined to one field, the existing field pattern and most of the field boundary vegetation would be retained. The development would not adversely affect the pastoral character of the LCA, with the Site also benefiting from some additional sheep grazing being created. • The marina would be located within the floodplain and consequently would not affect the sensitive valley slopes. • There would be an evident effect on the Oxford Canal, but would be a very localised effect, with the primary extent of the canal and characteristic built features being unaffected. The marina would form a new feature that clearly relates to the character of the canal. It would form a significant localised change, but reflecting the functional use of the canal and encouraging its further use. The creation of series of bays of mooring with intervening promontories with soft vegetated edges, would help break up the massing of narrow boat moorings and provide an attractive setting. • The proposed building would introduce a new built form into this largely rural setting. However, it would form a characteristic built feature of the canal, designed to provide an appropriate style and traditional canal character. The creation of parking areas and bays, yard and access roads would form evident areas of hard surfacing, but would affect only the local context of the Site. The dispersal and segregation of parking areas would help break up the massing of vehicles. Native tree and shrub planting would also help further integrate the proposals into the immediate local setting. • The change to landscape character would be largely limited to the context of the Site and existing field. The majority of the mature boundary vegetation would be retained. Consequently, the proposals would have little geographical influence, resulting in little change for the majority of the LCA. The proposed development would introduce a mixture of beneficial and adverse features, which on balance are considered to have a neutral effect in Year 1. The establishment of the proposed native planting would result in a beneficial effect in Year 15.	Medium	Low	High	**Medium**	**MODERATE NEUTRAL**	Medium	Low	High	**Medium**	**MODERATE BENEFICIAL**

LCA	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 - Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance
Northamptonshire Current Landscape Character Assessment												
LCA 19a Boddington Vale Farmland	**Medium**	◆ The proposed development would have an indirect effect on the LCA, due to the change occurring within the adjoining LCA. The retention of the wide double hedgerow, scrub and trees along the disused railway to the north of the Site and the mature hedgerow to the north-east of the Site, would result in there being little awareness of change having occurred in the neighbouring LCA. ◆ The key characteristics of being a broad flat landscape with a mixed arable and pastoral farmland, overgrown hedgerows, canal feaders and streams would be unaffected by the proposed development. ◆ The geographical influence on the LCA would be very limited, due to the very contained nature of the change within the adjoining LCA.	Very Low	Very Low	High	**Very Low**	**NEGLIGIBLE**	Very Low	Very Low	High	**Very Low**	**NEGLIGIBLE**
LCA 16a Boddington Hills	**High**	◆ A change would be experienced within a small part of a distant LCA. The marina would be barely discernible as a change in character, and would be discerned as an associated feature of the Oxford Canal, as it meanders through the lower broad flood plain. The introduction of the proposed building would just be discernible as an introduction of a new built feature into the landscape. The effect would influence a very small geographical area of the LCA. ◆ The establishment of the proposed tree and shrub belt planting would provide a largely effective screen by Year 15, and thus the proposed development would have a neutral effect.	Very Low	Very Low	High	**Very Low**	**MINOR ADVERSE**	Very Low	Very Low	High	**Very Low**	**MINOR NEUTRAL**

9.2 The proposed development would accord with the landscape strategy for the Upper Cherwell Basin LCA, being sensitively sited in a suitable location along the Oxford Canal and where there is a good level of existing mature vegetation to provide visual containment. The nature of the proposed development would be sympathetic to the canal setting, providing a beneficial functional feature to encourage the future use and enjoyment of the canal, which in itself is a feature of the landscape. It would provide an appropriate type of development that relates to the rural character of the LCA. Whilst built development would be introduced, the new building would form a characteristic built feature of the canal setting. Most of the hedgerows would be retained, and where removed would be replaced and further extended to provide species diverse native hedgerows. New native tree and shrub planting would be created, as well as extended wetland habitats with shallow sections and a significant increase the length of native marginal aquatic vegetation. This would help repair some of the former losses to the LCA, whilst also providing new beneficial landscape and ecological features.

Table 8.2: Effects on Site Landscape Features

Site Feature	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 - Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance
Landform	**Low**	• The proposals would result in a significant change to the landform, with the requirement for extensive earthworks, with a balanced mixture of cut and fill. In places, this would form a very evident change in landform, particularly along the western and northern edges of the Site. The main embankment along the northern extent of the marina, would have an approximate 1:7 slope to provide a moderate gradient and flowing landform, within an otherwise gently sloping landform. The embankment to the west would have a gentle gradient of 1:15 that would sympathetically relate to surrounding landform. The raising of the landform would initially form an evident change that contrasts with the Site's landform, which in time would be naturalised by the proposed planting. • The shape of the marina and irrigation lake would create natural organic forms, which together with native wetland vegetation, would offer sympathetic new wetland features. • After 15 years, the proposed marginal aquatics, hedge, tree /shrub planting & meadow grassland would have established to help soften the changes and integrate the landform into the local landscape setting, neutralising the changes.	High	High	High	**High**	**MODERATE ADVERSE**	High	High	High	**High**	**MODERATE NEUTRAL**
Vegetation	**High**	• A small section of scrub along the western Site boundary would need to be removed to provide vehicular access to the Site. This would be replaced with a species diverse hedge mix, further to the south, to fill in gaps in the existing hedge and thereby create a continuous native hedge. Native tree and shrub planting would also be added to create a belt of new scrub and trees within the western part of the Site. This in time, would establish to provide an effective boundary treatment. • A length of approximately 100m of good, well established and mature hedgerow, including ten young and semi-mature, Grade C2 ash trees, would need to be removed to provide access off the Oxford Canal into the marina. This would result in an initial localised detrimental loss. The hedgerow would be replaced and increased, through the planting of a new native species rich hedge within the centre of the Site, between the proposed marina and irrigation lake. • Most of the existing vegetation along the boundaries of the Site would be retained. The proposed native tree and shrub planting, within different parts of the Site, would establish to create a noticeable increase in the presence of scrub/woodland within the Site, providing both a landscape and ecological benefit. • There would be an initial minor detrimental loss of vegetation, resulting in an adverse change in Year 1. With the establishment of the proposed planting, this would become a beneficial change by Year 15.	Low	Low	High	**Low**	**MODERATE ADVERSE**	Medium	Medium	High	**Medium**	**MAJOR-MODERATE BENEFICIAL**

Site Feature	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 - Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance
Grassland & Aquatic Vegetation	**Medium**	◆ The proposed development would provide a significant increase in the presence of grassland and aquatic vegetation. Grassland on the embankments of the marina and fringe areas around the marina would be established to create areas of species rich meadow grassland. Peripheral areas to the north and east of the Site would be established as pasture for sheep grazing. An extensive area of new marginal aquatics would be created within the marina and parts of the irrigation lake. ◆ The proposals would provide a beneficial change, in what is largely a monoculture of arable farmland.	High	High	High	**High**	**MAJOR-MODERATE BENEFICIAL**	High	High	High	**High**	**MAJOR-MODERATE BENEFICIAL**
Land Use	**Medium**	◆ The existing arable farmland would be replaced with new wetland features, marina facilities, narrow boat moorings, native planting, and pastoral farmland. ◆ Whilst the proposals would include the intrusive change of new roads and parking facilities, as well as a new building, the change in land use is appropriate within the context of the adjoining Oxford Canal, and in the main provides a beneficial new land use, in terms of a leisure and recreational facility, and providing landscape and visual diversity. ◆ Whilst the nature of the change in land use is somewhat subjective, the change is considered overall to provide a benefit to a greater proportion of people experiencing the land use change i.e. encouraging greater access and use of the Oxford Canal and benefit to the local economy.	High	High	High	**High**	**MAJOR-MODERATE BENEFICIAL**	High	High	High	**High**	**MAJOR-MODERATE BENEFICIAL**
Access	**Medium**	◆ The proposed development would provide a significant increase in public access into the Site, which is currently not possible. The proposed development would provide a valuable local and regional leisure facility.	High	High	High	**High**	**MAJOR-MODERATE BENEFICIAL**	High	High	High	**High**	**MAJOR-MODERATE BENEFICIAL**

10 EFFECTS ON VIEWS

10.1 Refer to Appendix 3, Figures 02 and 04 and Representative Viewpoint photographs.

Table 9.1: Effects on Views

View/Location	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 - Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance
Viewpoint 1: Clayton Toplock	**High**	• The existing built and landscape features would remain unchanged within the view. Due to the effects of landform, distance, and intervening vegetation, the proposed development would not be visible within the view.	No Change	No Change	High	**No Change**	**NO CHANGE**	No Change	No Change	High	**No Change**	**NO CHANGE**
Viewpoint 2: Oxford Canal Towpath	**High**	• Despite being immediately adjacent to the proposed marina, the retention of the mature hedgerow to the view, would prevent views of the proposed development, due to the width and density of the existing hedge. • Very filtered views through the hedge may be possible in winter, if the viewer turns and faces at 90° to the hedge, but this would have little influence on the towpath user.	No Change	No Change	High	**No Change**	**NO CHANGE**	No Change	No Change	High	**No Change**	**NO CHANGE**
Viewpoint 3: Boddington Road Bridge	**Low**	• The proposed marina would form a very evident change to the view, with the loss of the existing large arable field and the creation of the new marina. There would be the loss of part of the hedge along the towpath and a widening of the canal in close proximity to the viewer. The changes in level would be much less apparent from this location and the proposals would be clearly understood and appreciated in the context of the existing Oxford Canal. • The canal already provides an interesting and valued feature within the view, in which the proposed marina would form an additional characteristic feature, providing further visual diversity and interest. • The arrangement and grouping of the narrow boat berths, and the shape and form of the marina, would create a natural appearance, providing a scenic additional canal feature within the view. Whilst a few parking bays and vehicles would be visible, most of the vehicles, car park and parking bays would be screened from view due to the new landform, changes in level and proposed planting. • The proposed building would be visible as a new built feature in a rural context but would reflect other characteristic built features along the canal. • The introduction of a new building and yard into an otherwise rural setting would result in a moderately intrusive change. However, the proposed marina and associated tree, shrub and wetland planting would give visual interest on crossing the bridge. On balance this is assessed as resulting in an overall neutral effect in Year 1. • The proposed hedge, woodland and copse at the canal entrance to the marina would have established by Year 15 to provide a partial screen of the marina and proposed building. The large area of woodland planting close to the viewer and other tree planting, would have established sufficiently to provide filtered or glimpsed views of the marina, and largely prevent views of the proposed building and yard. This would provide a beneficial visual effect.	High	High	High	**High**	**MODERATE NEUTRAL**	High	High	High	**High**	**MODERATE BENEFICAL**

View/Location	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 - Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance
Viewpoint 4: Boddington Road	**Low**	• Travelling south along Boddington Road, the proposed development would be screened from view by the woodland and trees/scrub along the disused railway line. On reaching the north-west corner of the Site, the proposed marina become very evident, significantly changing the view. • The scrub vegetation adjacent to the road, along the western Site boundary, would be removed, opening up the view into the Site. This would be replaced with the new vehicular access to the marina, together with an awareness of a change to the landform, and the introduction of the yard and proposed building. This would replace the existing view of the arable field, with areas of hard surfacing and a new building, contrasting with the rural setting and creating an intrusive change to the view. • The proposed woodland planting within the western part of the Site would have established by Year 15 to provide a largely effective screen for the area of proposed built development, most of the access road, parking bays and yard. The main remaining evident change would be the new road entrance into the Site and the presence of woodland adjacent to the road. Whilst the change to the view is somewhat subjective, it is considered that the replacing of patchy scrub with woodland would provide a neutral change to the view in Year 15.	High	High	High	**High**	**MODERATE ADVERSE**	Medium	High	High	**High**	**MODERATE NEUTRAL**
Viewpoint 5: Public Footpath AC1	**Medium**	• The hedge and trees in the foreground would obscure the proposed development in summer. Filtered views through the trees, if the hedge is cut, would be possible in winter. Very filtered views of the proposed irrigation reservoir through the hedge, and the top of the embankment and single way road would be visible as filtered views through the trees. Tops of the narrow boats, may also be just visible. The proposed building would be barely visible as filtered views through the denser vegetation to the right of the view. • The proposed building and vehicles would essentially be obscured from the view. Consequently, the visible changes in relation to glimpses of the waterbodies and landform are assessed as creating a neutral influence on the view. • By Year 15 the proposed planting would have established to further obscure the proposed marina.	Low	Low	High	**Low**	**MODERATE-MINOR NEUTRAL**	No Change	No Change	High	**No Change**	**NO CHANGE**
Viewpoint 6: Public Footpath AC1	**Medium**	• The existing trees and scrub along the disused railway would prevent any views of the proposed development in summer. • The vegetation along the disused railway is sufficiently dense to almost entirely obscure the proposed marina in winter. However, occasional glimpses through the vegetation would be possible, but the proposed marina would be a barely discernible new feature, which would have a negligible effect on the view.	Very Low	Low	High	**Very Low**	**NEGLIGIBLE**	No Change	No Change	High	**No Change**	**NO CHANGE**

View/Location	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 - Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance
Viewpoint 7: Unclassified Road	**Low**	◆ The top of the proposed building may be visible just above the hedge in the foreground in the winter, depending on the height of the cut hedge. No other parts of the proposed development would be visible in Year 1. In summer, the hedge would have grown to obscure the proposed development. ◆ By Year 15, the proposed trees would have established to become visible features in winter. However, the trees would largely be seen against a backdrop of existing trees, and as such would make little discernible change to the view. In the summer of Year 15 there would be no change to the view.	Very Low	Low	High	**Very Low**	**NEGLIGIBLE**	No Change	No Change	High	**No Change**	**NO CHANGE**
Viewpoint 8: Unclassified Road	**Low**	◆ The existing mature dense hedge along the road would prevent views of the proposed development in winter and summer.	No Change	No Change	High	**No Change**	**NO CHANGE**	No Change	No Change	High	**No Change**	**NO CHANGE**
Viewpoint 9: Public Footpath 170/3	**High**	◆ The nearest hedge in the mid-distance would largely obscure views of the proposed development in summer. The hedge and scrub along the Oxford Canal would further obscure views of the proposed marina. Whilst a section of hedge to the north of the canal would be removed to allow access into the marina, the mature scrub along the southern side of the canal would continue to provide a largely effective screen. Consequently, there would be little discernible change to the view in winter. ◆ The growth of the proposed new hedges, trees and shrub would further obscure the proposed marina by Year 15. The hedge in the summer of Year 15 would also be expected slightly taller and denser. Consequently, there would be no change to the view.	Very Low	Very Low	High	**Very Low**	**MINOR ADVERSE**	No Change	No Change	High	**No Change**	**NO CHANGE**
Viewpoint 10: Ducketts Lane, Farborough	**Medium**	◆ The proposed would make no discernible change to the view.	No Change	No Change	High	**No Change**	**NO CHANGE**	No Change	No Change	High	**No Change**	**NO CHANGE**

View/Location	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 - Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance
Viewpoint 11: Macmillan Way & Public Footpath 323/1a	**High**	◆ The proposed marina would form a discernible new feature within the view. This would form a minor element within a distant part of the view, set within the context of a large expanse of landscape, with a diversity of features. The marina would be a feature of interest, but would not be readily identifiable. ◆ The proposed marina would form a complimentary feature of the wider panoramic view. ◆ The proposed tree and shrub planting within the Site would have established by Year 15 to form discernible parts of the Site, but would be seen in context with existing vegetation and make little overall discernible difference to the view.	Very Low	Low	High	**Low Neutral**	**MODERATE NEUTRAL**	Very Low	Low	High	**Low Neutral**	**MODERATE NEUTRAL**
Viewpoint 12: Hill Road	**Medium**	◆ The proposed development would form a barely discernible new feature in winter. This would occur in a distant part of the view, creating a small feature within a much wider panoramic view. In summer the proposals would almost be entirely obscured by the trees and scrub along the disused railway to the north of the Site. ◆ The proposed marina would be difficult to discern in any detail and would create a sympathetic feature that would be consistent with the wider rural setting of the view.	Very Low	Low	High	**Low Neutral**	**MODERATE-MINOR NEUTRAL**	Very Low	Low	High	**Low Neutral**	**MODERATE-MINOR NEUTRAL**

View/Location	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 - Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance
Viewpoint 13: Oxford Canal Towpath	**High**	◆ The hedgerow to the right of view would be removed and the canal widened to create the new entrance to the marina. Other features in the view would be retained. The proposed new towpath bridge would be visible immediately to the fore of the view, with the main visible change being the rising of the towpath to cross the bridge and adjoining metal post and rail fences either side. The other evident change would be the grass embankments either side of the bridge, and the new sheet piling to contain the canal edge. ◆ Depending on the location of the visual receptor in relation to the retained section of hedgerow, the view would open out further to the right to reveal the western end of the marina. This would include the berths and narrow boats closest to the visual receptor, but also the proposed building, yard, and the maintenance and service bays. ◆ The proposals would result in a major change to the view for a short section of the canal. The changes would be consistent with the canal environment, with the new bridge being seen in the same visual context as Hay Bridge. The proposed building and yard would be visible in a peripheral part of the view, and whilst exhibiting a working canal character, would contrast with the existing rural context. The magnitude of change would be a largely subjective one depending on the user. For some canal users, this would form a feature of interest, providing a potential destination point, and thus a positive change. For others, it would be an adverse change to the rural setting. On balance, in this view, the change is more likely to be considered adverse in the winter of Year 1. ◆ With the establishment of the proposed hedge, copse and woodland, the view would noticeably change again creating a wooded character next to the canal and preventing views of the proposed building and yard, and the nearby berths and narrow boats. The rising towpath and embankments of the bridge, together with widened section of the canal would remain visible as an appropriate feature of the canal. Within the summer of Year 15, the changes would be noticeable, but less apparent that in Year 1, and on balance the proposed planting would create an appearance that would not be dissimilar to the existing situation and therefore a neutral effect.	High	High	High	**High**	**MAJOR ADVERSE**	Medium	High	High	**Medium**	**MAJOR-MODERATE NEUTRAL**

View/Location	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 - Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance
Viewpoint 14: Public Footpath 170/3	**Medium**	• The proposed development would form a prominent new feature in the view, creating a major change to the view. The eastern embankment and raised landform of the marina would initially create a clearly evident change in comparison to the existing situation and the landform of the adjoining fields. Vehicles parked in the parking bays on the eastern side of the marina would also form intrusive features within an otherwise rural context. The proposed building would also be evident as a more distant new feature. Narrow boats would form clearly evident new features, with their visual influence dependent on seasonal variations in numbers (i.e. less in winter). The creation of the lake would form a sympathetic new water feature, but would lack the establishment of the proposed wetland aquatic fringes. • In Year 1, there would be a mixture of adverse and beneficial changes, but on balance the change is assessed to be an adverse change. • The establishment of the proposed natural arrangement of native tree and shrub belts, scattered groups of trees, and copses within the eastern part of the Site, would provide important new features within the view. After 15 years, these would have established sufficiently to provide a meaningful contribution integrating the proposed development, creating a natural character and visual interest in the view. The proposed trees and shrubs would visually connect and strengthen the existing belts of vegetation along the disused railway line. The proposed trees would have established sufficiently to prevent or restrict views of the vehicles and the proposed building in the summer of Year 15. • The proposed marginal aquatics would have also matured creating natural fringes to the lake and marina. • By Year 15, the change to the view is assessed as being a beneficial change, creating a sympathetic feature that relates to the canal setting, providing greater visual interest to the view and increasing the treed/wooded and wetland characteristics of the view.	High	High	High	**High**	**MAJOR-MODERATE ADVERSE**	High	High	High	**High**	**MAJOR-MODERATE BENEFICAL**

10.2 The proposed development would be visually well contained, with little influence on views beyond the immediate visual context of the Site. The users that would be mainly affected by the proposed development would be those close to the Site, in particular the road users of a short section of Boddington Road, where there would be major change to the view, and for canal users for short section of Oxford Canal. Canal boat users, as well as walkers, anglers, and cyclist using the towpath adjacent to the Site would experience a very noticeable change at the proposed canal entrance to the marina. The proposed development would form a distinctive new feature along the canal, in which the proposed building would form a prominent new feature. With the establishment of the proposed planting, the

marina would become an integral part of the visual setting of the canal. The only residential property to be noticeably affected by the proposed development is the small house immediately adjacent to the Site. However, the house is uninhabited and in the ownership of the applicant.

11 CUMULATIVE EFFECT OF THE HS2 PROPOSALS ON VIEWS

11.1 The alignment of the current proposed route for the HS2, at its closest, would lie approximately 1.3kms to the north of the Site (based on the proposed alignment shown on Dwg No C222-ATK-CV-DPP-20-000014/P02). The section of HS2 line nearest to the Site would lie immediately to the south-west of Lower Boddington, following the alignment to Banbury Road. The route would be located in the valley floor, near to the base of the northern valley slopes. The ground is proposed to be raised either side of the route over a large area. The proposals indicate that these would be 'landscape earthworks', with much of the earthworks appearing to be returned to agriculture. Some of the embankments would be planted with woodland scrub. The raising of the landform allows the HS2 rail line to be set in a cutting, thereby reducing or removing views and noise of passing trains.

11.2 Views in close proximity of the Site (Viewpoints 1-9 and 13-14) would not be affected, primarily due to the viewer being located on the valley floor, and the influence of intervening mature vegetation. There is a potential cumulative influence from more elevated distance views (Viewpoints 10-12). From Viewpoint 10, the proposed development, which is closer to the viewer, would not be visible. Consequently, there would be no cumulative effect.

11.3 A walker at Viewpoint 11 on the Macmillan Way, would be located at the top of the Highfurlong Brook valley slope and would have panoramic views over the landscape to the west and north-west. The view covers a location where both the proposed development and HS2 development would be seen as part of the wider panoramic view. However, the two developments would not be seen in the same visual context, but rather as clearly separated features within different sectors of the view. The HS2 route passes through the local plateau ridge within a tunnel, exiting on the lower valley slopes of the Highfurlong Brook, approximately 1.6kms to the right of the view, beyond the line of sight. The first awareness of the HS2 route would be where it passes through open arable fields immediately to the south of Lower Boddington. Here it would lie within a cutting formed by the raised earthworks, beyond the mature trees along Highfurlong Brook. It may be possible to glimpse passing trains, but the main discernible change would be the proposed earthworks, which would be seen as a rise in the local landform. At the distance of the viewer, and assuming that most of the earthworks are returned to agricultural land, the proposals would make little discernible change. Beyond Lower Boddington, the HS2 route becomes a distant feature crossing the valley floor before passing the base of Berry Hill. The route would be discernible, but at a distance of over 3kms, would have little influence on the view, with the railway continuing to be contained by the proposed earthworks. The proposed development would also be discernible, but a minor feature in a distant peripheral part of the view. Given that the

changes would also occur within different sectors of the view, the cumulative change is considered to be negligible.

11.4 From the elevated view from Hill Lane, as represented by Viewpoint 12, there are distant panoramic views across the landscape, in which both developments would be visible within approximately the same visual context. The HS2 route would form a prominent new feature within the mid-distance, as it crosses the relatively open agricultural landscape. The loss of hedges and copses, and the formation of the raised earthworks would initially make a very noticeable intrusive influence of the view, although it is likely that passing trains would not be visible due to being set within the cutting. Depending on the depth of the cutting, the tops of overhead gantries are likely to be visible, identifying the presence of the railway. In time, the proposed planting of woodland and hedgerows and the re-establishment of the agricultural land use on the new earthworks would help integrate the route in the view and reduce the influence on the view. The proposed development would form a much smaller feature in a distant part of the view. The existing mature tree and shrub belt along the disused railway line, along the northern boundary, largely prevents views of the proposed development. Given that the proposed development would be a barely discernible new feature within a distant part of the view, it is the HS2 route that would draw the attention of the viewer, with the proposed development forming a negligible cumulative effect on the view.

12 EFFECTS ON DESIGNATIONS

12.1 The Special Landscape Areas, Farnborough Hall Registered Park and Garden, and listed buildings are sufficiently distant from the Site, that together with the screening effect of the intervening landform and vegetation, there would be no effect on views or the character of these designations.

13 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

13.1 The proposed development incorporates a large new marina for narrow boats, associated facilities, parking provision, an irrigation lake, and tree, shrub, hedge and marginal aquatic vegetation. The proposals would provide an important new facility on the Oxford Canal, providing off-line mooring and administrative facilities that would support and encourage future use of the canal. The proposed marina has been designed to provide a self contained location that relates to the traditional character of the canal and local landscape. The use of a fluid and organic shapes and forms for the marina and irrigation lake would provide a sympathetic character within the predominantly rural context of the Site. Provision of dispersed segmented berths, separated by promontories, the creation of a peninsula that protrudes into the marina, and the extensive use of marginal aquatics as part of a soft edge treatment, would enable the proposed development to integrate into the local canal and landscape context. The proposed building would be constructed to serve existing and future canal users, and designed to reflect the traditional built character of the canal. Parking facilities are provided to meet

the needs of the marina. These have been designed to minimise the effect of vehicle parking, by dispersing the parking facilities at different points around the marina. This helps to provide easier access to moorings, as well as break up the massing of parked vehicles. Proposed indigenous native tree and shrub planting would be used to provide screening and further reduce the effect of parked vehicles.

13.2 There would be an initial significant adverse effect within the Site and immediate adjoining landscape and views, primarily during a short period of 3 months whilst the earthworks are undertaken. This would be a very localised effect, with no requirement to bring material on to Site or remove spoil from the Site.

13.3 The completed development would result in major changes to Site features, including the loss of arable farmland and with extensive earthworks required to create the dam and irrigation reservoir. With the growth of the proposed vegetation this would soften and naturalise the changes in landform. The proposed trees, shrubs, hedges, marginal aquatics and grassland would also provide an important influence on the Site, more than compensating for the loss of a section of mature hedge and ten moderate sized ash along the canal, the patchy scrub and hedge along Boddington Road, and the monoculture of arable crops. The proposed vegetation would establish to provide beneficial new landscape and ecological features.

13.4 The proposed development would also have a very localised effect on landscape character, due to the influence of landform and existing vegetation, which would contain the proposed marina. The nature, character and design of the marina would be sympathetic to the canal and rural character of the local landscape. The Site is located within the Upper Cherwell Basin LCA (as defined by the Cherwell District Landscape Character Assessment). The canal is a key characteristic feature of the landscape, and the proposed development would form a new and distinctive focal feature on the canal, that would relate to its historic working past, and current leisure, working and living uses. Arable farmland does not form a characteristic of the LCA, with the landscape primarily being characterised by pastoral farmland. Consequently, the loss of the existing arable field would not be significant to the LCA. The proposals would also create the benefit of providing a part of the Site for pastoral land use. The proposals would create new sympathetic wetland features, in an otherwise relatively featureless pastoral landscape. They would also relate well to the canal, one of the main special features of the LCA. The proposed marina would introduce additional activity and potentially some increased noise in the summer months. The proposed building would introduce a new moderate sized building in an otherwise rural part of the landscape, although would form a characteristic built feature of the canal. The provision of access roads, yard, car park and parking bays would form intrusive features, but these have been designed to minimise their effect, and their presence as new features would be essentially limited to the Site. The proposed native planting would provide beneficial new landscape and ecological features that

would also help integrate the proposed development into the Site and immediate local context. On balance the changes are assessed as creating a Moderate Neutral significance of effect to the LCA in Year 1 and with the maturing of the proposed vegetation would be Moderate Beneficial in Year 15.

13.5 Due to the very localised effect of the proposed development, the effects on adjoining LCAs would be minimal.

13.6 The existing landform, woodland, mature trees and hedges along the boundaries of the Site visually contain the Site. Consequently, there would be limited visibility of the proposed development, beyond the immediate context of the Site. Fourteen viewpoints have been used to represent different users and geographical locations. The proposed development would form a major change to the view, for a short section of the Oxford Canal and its towpath at the entrance to the marina (Viewpoint 13), and a short section of Public Footpath 170/3 (Viewpoint 14) where the walker has an elevated view over the Site. In Year 1, the proposals would result in an adverse effect, but by Year 15, the proposed woodland, copses, and tree and hedge planting would have established to form a strong characteristic feature of the Site providing a neutral or beneficial effect on the views. The other main change occurs for road users over a short section of Boddington Road, on crossing the bridge over the Oxford Canal (Viewpoint 3) and along the western edge of the Site (Viewpoint 4), where there would be a very evident change to the views providing a distinctive new feature on the canal in Year 1. The views would be experienced briefly by occasional passing vehicles. For the rest of the canal, the mature, continuous and dense hedgerows along the northern and eastern edge of the canal would essentially prevent views of the proposed marina. Views from other local public footpaths and roads, are heavily curtailed by intervening vegetation, limiting views to glimpses or filtered views with most views being unaffected, or the change being negligible or minor. There are a few long distance views from elevated locations allowing panoramic views towards the Site. The proposed development would either not be visible or form a minor new feature within a distant part of the view having a limited effect on the view. The proposed HS2 route would also be visible in two of these elevated locations, from the top of the valley slopes on Macmillan Way (Viewpoint 11) and Hill Road near to Upper Boddington (Viewpoint 12). There would be a negligible cumulative effect on these Viewpoints as a result of the proposed development.

13.7 The effects of the proposed development would be largely contained to a very localised context, providing a sympathetic new feature, reflecting the character of its canal setting, and assessed as providing an appropriate development in terms of landscape character and views.

Appendix 1: Methodology

1 SCOPE AND PROCESS

Introduction

1.1 Landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) involves a combination of quantitative and qualitative considerations within a framework that allows for structured, informed and reasoned professional judgment. The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), Third Edition, forms the current nationally recognized professional guidance tool for LVIA. The GLVIA reflects current legislation and professional experience over many years of undertaking landscape and visual assessments. This methodology follows the principles recommended within GLVIA Third Edition as part of the assessment process. Matrices are utilised to enable consistent and transparent judgements to be applied and understood by the reader. This applies different levels of sensitivity and magnitude and combined to define significance of effect. The category levels and combinations set out in this methodology reflects the typical situation. However, there are occasions when it is not appropriate to apply these judgement in a rigid and formulaic manner, and may assessor judge that it would be appropriate to apply a different category or combination. This would primarily apply in the combining of sensitivity and magnitude used in Tables A7 and A14. Any deviation from the categories used in the matrices are explained in the main body of the report.

1.2 In defining 'landscape' within GLVIA, reference is made to the adopted definition agreed by the European Landscape Convention (Florence: Council of Europe 2000), which states that the landscape is *"an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors"*. This definition includes the landscapes of towns and cities i.e. townscapes. Throughout this methodology, for the purposes of this assessment, the term 'landscape' should be taken to be synonymous with 'townscape'.

1.3 Whilst the process of assessment is often referred to as a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, it is important to understand the difference between 'impact' and 'effect'. 'Impact' is defined as the action being taken and 'effect' as the change resulting from the action. The changes resulting from the implementation of the development form the main consideration of this assessment and thus the word effect is mainly used. The two main components are:

- landscape effects – assessing effects on the landscape as a resource in it is own right; and
- visual effects – assessing effects on specific views and the general amenity of the view.

1.4 An assessment of the existing situation and the effects of the proposals is carried out in relation to the following geographical extents:

- national and regional scale landscape character and the wider visual setting;

- county and district scale landscape character and the local visual setting; and
- the Site and more immediate landscape and visual setting.

1.5 The spatial scope of the landscape and visual assessment covers a study area of approximately 2 km radius from the Site. This is based on the initial results of a desktop study reviewing location, topography and nature of the development. This desk based work is then verified as part of the field survey.

1.6 The likely effects of the proposed scheme were assessed in terms of the degree of change on completion of the works in the first year (Year 1) in winter and after a period of 15 years (Year 15) in summer. Where the field survey and assessment were carried out in April 2017 and November 2018, with a correlation being made as to what the predicted effects would be in winter and summer. An assessment in Year 15 enables the effectiveness of any planting and soft works mitigation measures to be determined over a sufficient period for the proposals to have established and delivered their intended objectives in a meaningful way. Between Years 1 and 15, the proposed planting will be in the process of meeting these objectives and a correlation over this span of time can be made as to the extent to which this has been partially achieved. Beyond 15 years, trees can be expected to continue to grow to reach their mature height, and thus potentially provide increased mitigation in later years.

1.7 The assessment uses the following process for both landscape and visual effects, as set out in the GLVIA:

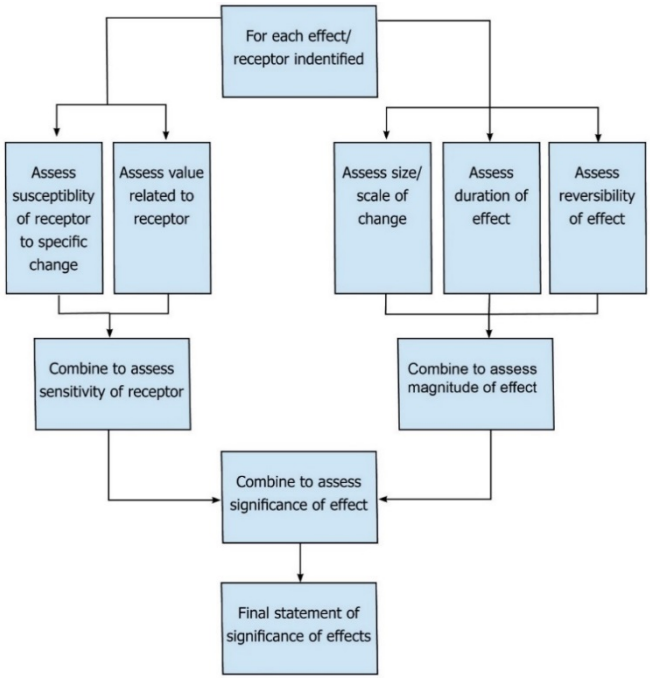


Figure A1 - Assessing the significance of effect

Viewpoint analysis and assessment

1.8 The extent of visual influence of the Development is described as the Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI). This area is identified in two stages. First an initial desk based study of landform, major vegetation and built form is carried out, and secondly an assessment in the field. The field work includes walking the Site and observing locations that are visible beyond the Site and then checking this by visiting the locations beyond the Site where publicly accessible. The extent of the ZVI is therefore progressively determined and fine-tuned.

1.9 To assist the reader, viewpoints are provided to demonstrate the range of available views for a variety of receptors and geographical locations. The GLVIA refers to three types of viewpoint, which are set out and utilised as described below.

- **Representative viewpoint** – provides a viewpoint that may be considered as typical or similar to a particular location and where the significant effects are unlikely to differ. It therefore can be considered as being representative of other views, e.g. from a PROW or group of houses. Where the viewpoint is not representative of a neighbouring visual receptor, and there would be different significant effects, this is stated within the text.

- **Specific viewpoint** – illustrates a particular noteworthy or key view. This may be a promoted viewpoint or from a specific visitor attraction, tourist destination, statutory landscape designation, or particular locally valued recreational or cultural landscape associations.

- **Illustrative viewpoint** – provided to demonstrate particular features, effects or issues. These are used to illustrate: particular Site features; the extent of visibility from within the Site from non-publicly accessible locations; or features that prevent views from certain locations.

1.10 A range of representative viewpoints are selected to assess the available views at a variety of different geographical locations, distances and receptor experiences. Viewpoint locations include public rights of way, roads and open space. Viewpoints are provided to help appreciate and then describe the views available, identify features within the view, define the location and extent of the Site within the view, and to provide a visual record. On the photographs, the location and extent of the Site is indicated to help the reader.

1.11 The assessment of views includes the detailed consideration of:

- the proximity of the visual receptor to the proposed development;
- the extent of visibility or proportion of the proposed development visible within the wider context of the view;
- the nature and complexity of the existing view and any changes that would affect the skyline;

- elements within the view that may detract from or add to its quality;
- the extent to which the proposed development occupies the view, and whether a framed view, glimpsed or panoramic view; and
- whether the view would be experienced from a specific fixed location or whether it would form part of a sequence of views when the viewer would be moving, and if from a fixed location, such as a window, whether the proposed development would form the central focus of the view or a more oblique outlook.

1.12 A variety of visual receptors are assessed with a focus on those who are most likely to be concerned about changes to views.

Photography and site work

1.13 Photographs are taken using a digital camera with an appropriate lens set to provide a focal length equivalent to a 50mm focal length lens on a manual 35mm film SLR camera.

1.14 A Nikon D5200 digital single lens reflex camera with an AF-S Nikkor 18-55mm zoom lens was used. The camera has a focal length multiplier of 1.5, so with the zoom set to 33mm this provides a focal length equivalent to a 50mm focal length lens on a manual 35mm film SLR camera. The horizontal field of view in landscape format from a single frame shot is approximately 40 degrees.

1.15 The camera is rotated in increments to allow a reasonable proportion of overlap of photographs to create a join that is as accurate as possible.

1.16 The photographs were taken in sunny weather and average to good visibility. Wherever possible photographs are taken with the sun behind or to one side of the view to prevent over-exposure and a high contrast of photographs or features appearing in shadow.

1.17 The panoramic photographs are stitched together using an Adobe Photoshop Plugin (Photomerge). Exposure and levels are adjusted to ensure a smooth transition between the photographs.

2 CRITERIA AND CATEGORIES: LANDSCAPE

2.1 The assessment includes a description of the existing landscape elements including topography, vegetation, landform, land uses, infrastructure of the landscape and provides an assessment of the effects of the Development. The national landscape character areas provide a useful basis for setting the scene and to understand the broad scale of the landscape at the national context. However, the primary source assessing landscape character is based on district scale character assessments. The key characteristics that form the landscape are identified, including the individual elements, aesthetic aspects and perceptual aspects, and their condition identified. An

assessment of effects on the Site itself is made predominantly in relation to change/loss of the individual landscape features.

2.2 In determining the significance of effects on the landscape, sensitivity is determined for each: landscape feature within the Site; landscape character area; or landscape type that would be affected and combined with the magnitude of change arising from the proposed development. The criteria and categories used to determine the effects on landscape, is set out below.

Landscape sensitivity (the nature of the receptor)

2.3 This in part is based on the **value** of the landscape receptor. This includes considerations such as: landscape quality / condition; landscape fabric and rarity; scenic quality; wildlife, heritage and cultural interest; recreation value; and perceptual aspects. The presence of a landscape designation can help to identify value and reasons for a designation are usually established in a supporting study. Landscapes or features without any formal designation may also express characteristics that are valued locally. Where there is no supporting evidence base, details regarding sensitivity should typically be derived from landscape character assessments.

Table A1: Value of Landscape Receptor

Value of landscape receptor	Criteria
Very High	**Character:** Areas with international or national landscape designations, i.e. National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or international heritage designations, i.e. World Heritage Sites and their landscape setting, and displaying good condition and/or a strong strength of character. Very high value may occasionally exist in landscapes with no such designation, where the Landscape Character Assessment or Historic Environment Assessment indicates an area as being of particular high sensitivity or international or national rarity. **Features:** form a very important contributory element of the landscape, that have particular historical or cultural reference, or are distinctive or rare and typically of good condition.
High	**Character:** Landscape Character Assessments that identify an Area of being of high sensitivity, e.g. good condition and/or strong strength of character or of particular local value. Areas with local landscape designations may indicate a High value, but weight should also be given to the Landscape Character Assessment to determine the specific value. **Features:** form an important element of the landscape and a major contribution to the character of the landscape. Features play an important role in the local visual and amenity of the area, are typically of good condition and likely to be of historical or cultural relevance to the locality.
Medium	**Character**: Landscape type or area is identified as medium sensitivity (e.g. having a moderate condition and/or strength of character) including judgements within relevant Landscape Character Assessments as of medium sensitivity. The landscape likely to exhibit some damage or deterioration but may have some individual features of local rarity or value. **Features:** forms a notable feature in the landscape, but does not form an important or key characteristic. Alternatively, the feature is an intrinsic element of landscape but is in poor condition. Feature contributes some value to the visual and amenity aspect of the locality and provides some relevance to the historical or cultural context of the landscape.

Low	**Character:** Landscape type or area is identified as having low sensitivity (e.g. poor condition and/or weak strength of character). Landscapes will typically illustrate clear indication of damage, deterioration, and limited visual cohesion. **Features:** forms an intrusive element that is unlikely to be valued or provides a limited contribution to the character and local visual and amenity value. The feature may be of such poor condition that it has lost its ability to contribute effectively to the character of the landscape. It is likely that the feature has little historical or cultural relevance.

2.4 '**Susceptibility to change**' assesses the relative ability for the landscape to accommodate the changes that would result from different types of development. This is an integral element of the landscape, but one that can only be judged in the context of the generic type of development being proposed. However, it is not necessary to understand the specifics of the development to make this judgement and thus susceptibility to change can be considered as part of the baseline assessment. Susceptibility to change will, in part, relate to the features and characteristics displayed within the landscape type or area: the relative extent of enclosure and openness; the presence of similar development within or adjacent to the landscape type or area; condition/quality; and the ability to meet landscape planning policies and strategies. Where available, reference is made to judgements made in landscape character assessments as well as Site based judgements. It is particularly important to make this judgement in the context of the Site, i.e. determining the relative presence of those aspects that are evident within the proximity of the Site.

Table A2: Landscape susceptibility to change

Susceptibility to change	Criteria
Very High	A very limited ability of the landscape to accommodate development of the type proposed. Features particularly susceptible to change from development.
High	A fairly limited ability of the landscape to accommodate development of the type proposed. Features have a high susceptible to change from development.
Medium	A moderate ability of the landscape to accommodate development of the type proposed. Features likely to have evident susceptibility to change from development.
Low	A well-defined ability of the landscape to accommodate development of the type proposed. Features has little susceptibility to change from development.

2.5 These two aspects of susceptibility to change and value are combined to create an overall judgement of sensitivity as follows.

Table A3: Landscape sensitivity matrix

Criteria		Susceptibility			
		Very High	High	Medium	Low
Value	Very High	Very High	Very High	High	Medium
	High	Very High	High	High	Medium
	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Very Low

Magnitude of landscape effect

2.6 The magnitude of effect of the Development on each of the landscape character types or areas was assessed on the basis of three factors: '**size or scale of change**', '**geographical influence'** and '**duration and reversibility'**, which are combined to provide an overall judgement of magnitude.

2.7 The size or scale is based on the following professional judgement and site based assessment.

Table A4: Landscape: size or scale of change

Size/scale of change	Criteria
Very High	The proposals constitute a very major change to the feature or key characteristics and attributes of the landscape type or area, resulting in total loss or permanent alteration to existing landscape features and forming a dominant new feature in the landscape.
High	The proposals constitute a major change to the feature or key characteristics and attributes of the landscape type or area, resulting in major loss or permanent alteration to existing landscape features and forming a prominent new feature in the landscape.
Medium	The proposals constitute a noticeable change to the feature or key characteristics and attributes of the landscape type or area, resulting in a conspicuous loss or alteration to existing landscape features and forming a new feature in the landscape.
Low	The proposals constitute a minor change to the feature or key characteristics and attributes of the landscape type or area, resulting in limited loss or alteration to existing landscape features and forming a minor new feature in the landscape.
Very Low	The proposals constitute little discernible change to the feature or key characteristics and attributes of the landscape type or area, resulting in no loss or permanent alteration to existing landscape features and forming a barely discernible new feature in the landscape.

2.8 **Geographical influence** determines the extent of the local landscape type affected by the proposed development.

Table A5: Landscape: geographical influence

Geographical influence	Criteria
Very High	Effects experienced over an extensive area of the feature or a district level landscape character area, where this is likely to have an evident effect at the national level of landscape character.
High	Effects experienced where changes would occur over large parts of a feature or landscape character area.
Medium	A moderate extent of a feature or landscape character area is affected.
Low	Effects limited to a localised area and small proportion of the overall feature or landscape character area.
Very Low	Effects limited to a very restricted extent, sufficient that there is little discernible influence on the feature or character of the landscape character area.

2.9 Magnitude is also affected by duration and reversibility, as set out below:

Table A6: Landscape: duration and reversibility

Duration & reversibility	Criteria
High	Long-term development over 30 years and/or difficult to reverse.
Medium	Medium-term development (5 to 30 years) and/or moderately difficult to reverse.
Low	Short-term development 1 to 5 years and/or fully reversible.

2.10 The three aspects of magnitude are combined based on professional judgement, with greater weight being given to scale/size of change, into one of the following categories: **Very High, High, Medium, Low, Very Low** or **No Change** where there is no effect.

Significance of effect and nature of change

2.11 On the basis of the above the following categories of significance of effect for landscape change are identified.

Table A7: Significance of Effect on Landscape

Criteria		Sensitivity				
		Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
Magnitude	Very High	Major	Major	Major-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-Minor
	High	Major	Major-Moderate	Major-Moderate	Moderate	Minor
	Medium	Major-Moderate	Major-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-Minor	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-Minor	Minor	Negligible
	Very Low	Moderate-Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

2.12 The nature of change of the effect is also identified providing a judgement on whether the predicted effects would be would be beneficial, adverse or neutral on the basis of the following:

- **Adverse effects** - those effects that are, on balance, damaging to the quality, integrity or key characteristics of the landscape or visual resource.
- **Beneficial effects** - those effects that would, on balance, result in an improvement in the quality, integrity or key characteristics of the landscape or visual resource.
- **Neutral effects** - those effects that would maintain, on balance, the existing levels of the quality, integrity or key characteristics of the landscape or visual resource. (A neutral effect may therefore arise where beneficial effects offset adverse effects or where the value judgement would consider the change to be different, but neither a deterioration or an enhancement).

2.13 For the purposes of this assessment, effects that are considered to be 'significant' i.e. those of greatest consideration in determining a planning application, are those that create an effect of Major or Major-Moderate significance with an adverse nature of change.

3 CRITERIA AND CATEGORIES: VIEWS

3.1 In determining the significance of effects on views, sensitivity is determined for each visual receptor that would be affected and combined with the magnitude of change arising from the proposed development. The criteria and categories used to determine the effects on views, is set out below.

The nature of the receptor (sensitivity)

3.2 The sensitivity of views is considered in relation to the person experiencing the view. This in part will be based on the **value** that the receptor places on the view. This is considered on a collective basis, so will be influenced by the extent to which it is publicised, relative note-worthiness, i.e.

clearly defined view or vista that is distinguished from other views, and the extent to which the view is utilised or enjoyed.

Table A8: Value of view

Value of view	Criteria
High	Views from publicised vantage points and of regional and sub-regional value. Tourist attractions / historic estates /statutory heritage asset with a specific vista or focused views. Particularly noteworthy public views from national trails, National Parks or AONBs or statutory heritage assets, i.e. more than local value and could be expected to be regularly used. Windows from residential properties specifically designed to take advantage of a particular view.
Medium	Locally known or valued viewpoints. View of little noteworthiness from tourist attractions / historic estates /statutory heritage asset/ National Park / AONB. Views from promoted public rights of way or clear evidence of regular use and areas of informal open space. Views from regularly used rooms or living space. Panoramic view, vista or other noteworthy view from active recreation areas or transport routes.
Low	View is not publicised and/or that there is relatively limited evidence of being regularly used. Visually degraded locations. View from small windows or likely non-main living spaces. Views of little noteworthiness from areas of active recreation, churchyards or transport routes.

3.3 The '**susceptibility to change**' of the visual receptor will vary depending on the activity or use of the particular location and the extent to which the view is an important aspect of the activity or use. The following criteria are used to determine susceptibility to change:

Table A9: Susceptibility of visual receptor to change

Susceptibility of visual receptor to change	Criteria
High	Residential properties. Areas of open space where informal recreation is the main activity e.g. country parks and public open space. Users of public rights of way. Recreational activity where the primary enjoyment comes from the view. General views from heritage assets or attractions.
Medium	Areas of outdoor sport or active recreation where appreciation of views forms part of the experience, e.g. golf courses; pedestrians using footways along roads; vehicular users and cyclists on roads; and rail passengers.
Low	Areas of active sport or play where the view does not form part of the experience e.g. football, cricket, play equipment. Commercial/educational premises and areas of employment, where the view has limited value in relation to the activity being undertaken. There may be specific locations where buildings and the type use has been designed to enhance the quality of working life, in which case a medium level sensitivity would be applicable.

3.4 These two aspects are combined to create an overall judgement of sensitivity as follows:

Table A10: Visual sensitivity matrix

Criteria		Susceptibility		
		High	Medium	Low
Value	High	Very High	High	Medium
	Medium	High	Medium	Low
	Low	Medium	Low	Very Low

Magnitude of visual effect

3.5 The magnitude of effect of the Development on each view was assessed on the basis of three factors, '**size or scale of change**', '**geographical influence'** and '**duration and reversibility'**, which are combined to provide an overall judgement of magnitude. The size or scale is based on the following professional judgement and Site based assessment.

Table A11: Visual: size or scale of change

Size/Scale of Change	Criteria
Very High	The proposed development would become the most dominant feature in the view and that completely contrasts with the other existing features in the view. The contrasting features of the development would be fully visible.
High	The proposal development would constitute a major change to the view, forming a prominent new feature in the view that noticeably contrasts with other existing features in the view. The development would be predominantly visible.
Medium	The proposals development would form a noticeable change to the view, forming a conspicuous new feature in the view that partially contrasts or harmonises with other features in the view. The contrasting features of the development would be partially visible.
Low	The proposal development would constitute a small change to the view, forming a minor new feature in the view that largely integrates with its surroundings with little discernible change. This could also be a result of being a glimpsed or filtered view through vegetation and/or at some distance relative to its scale.
Very Low	The proposed development would be a barely discernible change to the view, which could e.g. be due to a very filtered view through vegetation or considerable distance relative to scale.

3.6 **Geographical extent** determines how far the effect would be experienced. The wider the geographical effect, the greater magnitude of change.

Table A12: Visual: geographical influence

Geographical Influence	Criteria
Very High	The development affects all or nearly all of the view and forms the primary focus of the view to the extent that it is overwhelming. It is likely that the view is within the Site or very close to the Site.
High	The development affects a large extent of the view and at the centre of the view. It is likely that the view is close to the Site or possibly in the Site.
Medium	The development affects a moderate extent of the view and lies near the centre of the view or at a slightly oblique angle. It is likely that this is a localised view.
Low	The development affects a small extent of the view and and/or at a moderately oblique angle. It is likely that the development is in the mid-distance of the view.
Very Low	The development affects a very small extent of the view and and/or at a very oblique angle. It is likely that the development is in the far distance of the view.

3.7 Magnitude is also affected by **duration and reversibility**, as set out below:

Table A13: Visual: duration and reversibility

Duration & reversibility	Criteria
High	Long-term development over 30 years and/or difficult to reverse.
Medium	Medium-term development (5 to 30 years) and/or moderately difficult to reverse.
Low	Short-term development 1 to 5 years and/or fully reversible.

3.8 The three aspects of magnitude are combined based on professional judgement, with greater weight being given to scale/size of change, into one of the following categories: **Very High, High, Medium, Low, Very Low** or **No Change** where there is no effect.

Significance of effect

3.9 On the basis of the above, the following categories of significance of effect for visual change are identified, with those with a green tone identified as of overall as being 'significant'.

Table A14: Significance of effect on views

Criteria		Sensitivity				
		Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
Magnitude	Very High	Major	Major	Major-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-Minor
	High	Major	Major-Moderate	Major-Moderate	Moderate	Minor
	Medium	Major-Moderate	Major-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-Minor	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-Minor	Minor	Negligible
	Very Low	Moderate-Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

3.10 The nature of change of the effect is also identified providing a judgement on whether the predicted effects would be would be beneficial, adverse or neutral on the basis of the following:

- **Adverse effects** - those effects that are, on balance, damaging to the quality, integrity or key characteristics of the landscape or visual resource.
- **Beneficial effects** - those effects that would, on balance, result in an improvement in the quality, integrity or key characteristics of the landscape or visual resource.
- **Neutral effects** - those effects that would maintain, on balance, the existing levels of the quality, integrity or key characteristics of the landscape or visual resource. (A neutral effect may therefore arise where beneficial effects offset adverse effects or where the value judgement would consider the change to be different, but neither a deterioration or an enhancement).

3.11 For the purposes of this assessment, effects that are considered to be 'significant' i.e. those of greatest consideration in determining a planning application, are those that create an effect of Major or Major-Moderate significance with an adverse nature of change.

4 CRITERIA OF OTHER FACTORS ASSESSED

4.1 The assessment also considered the following aspects, as set out below.

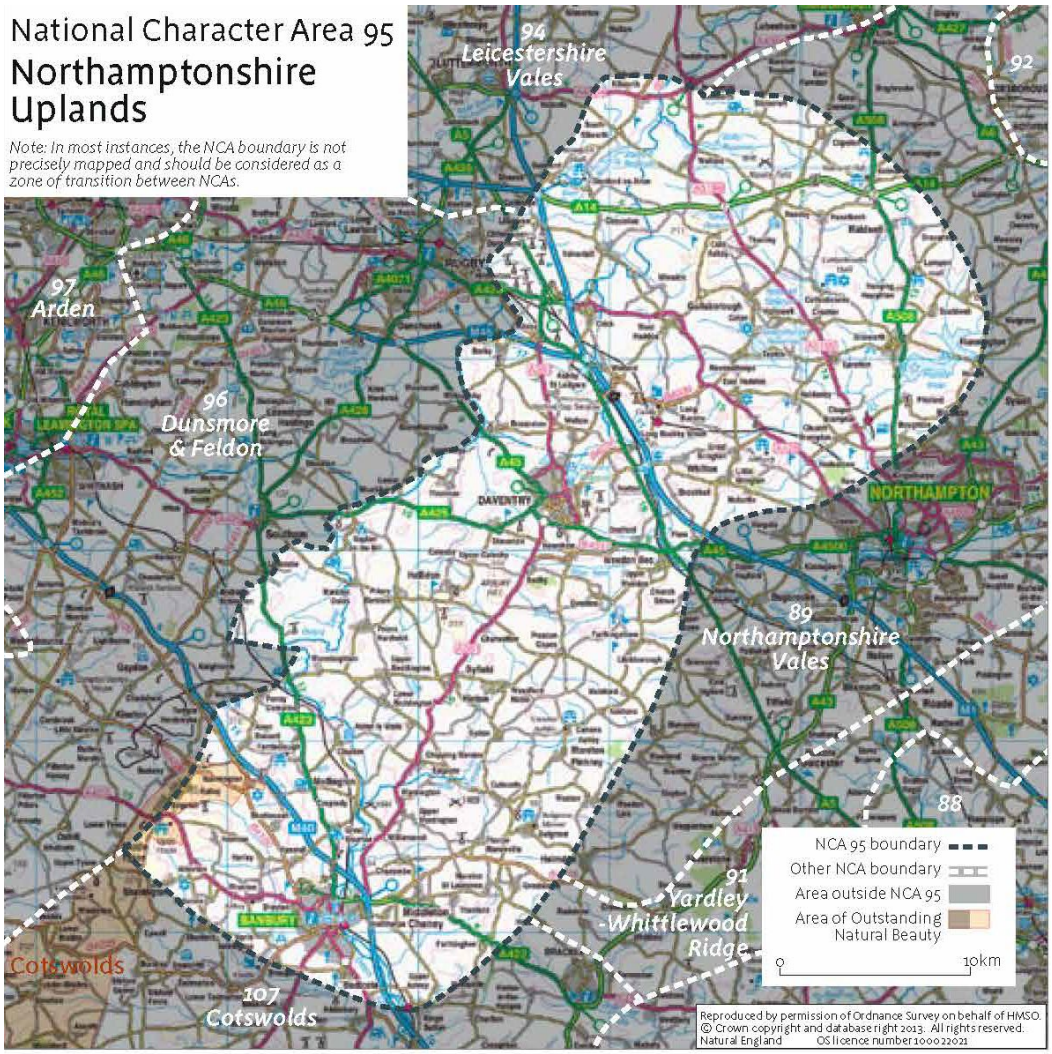
- **Direct and indirect**: Direct effects relate to the changes on the Site including re-contouring of landform, loss and addition of vegetation, removal or inclusion of built structures and surface treatments, etc. Direct effects are also experienced where there are changes to the character of the landscape, where the proposed development is physically located within a character area or type. Effects on views are also always considered to be direct. Indirect effects occur where the character is influenced by changes in a neighbouring landscape character area.

- **Seasonal variation and duration**: Due to the role that vegetation can play in preventing or limiting views or influencing the character of the landscape, the difference between winter and summer needs to be considered. This is considered by assessing impacts in winter (in the first year following completion) and in summer (after 15 years).

Appendix 2: National Character Area

National Character Area 95
Northamptonshire Uplands

Note: In most instances, the NCA boundary is not precisely mapped and should be considered as a zone of transition between NCAs.



Key characteristics

- Gently rolling rounded hills and valleys with many long, low ridgelines and great variety of landform. Wide, far-reaching views from the edges and across the ridgetops.
- Dominant Jurassic scarp slope of limestone and Lias clay hills capped locally with ironstone-bearing Marlstone and Northampton Sands. Glacial boulder clay covers the northern and eastern areas, with sands and gravels along river valleys.
- The Upper Nene Valley divides the gently undulating Northamptonshire Heights to the north from the hillier Cherwell/Ouse plateau (the 'Ironstone Wolds') to the south and has been exploited for sand and gravel.
- Rivers rise and flow outwards in all directions, including the rivers Cherwell, Avon, Welland, Tove, Ouse, Nene and Ise, and the area forms the main watershed of Middle England.
- Sparse woodland cover, but with scattered, visually prominent, small, broadleaved woods, copses and coverts, particularly on higher ground.
- Mixed farming dominates with open arable contrasting with permanent pasture.
- Typical 'planned countryside' with largely rectangular, enclosed field patterns surrounded by distinctive, high, often A-shaped hedgerows of predominantly hawthorn and blackthorn, with many mature hedgerow trees, mostly ash and oak. Some ironstone and limestone walls in places and some localised areas of early irregular enclosure.
- Small pockets of semi-natural vegetation with many small scattered broadleaved woodlands, some ancient and often on hill tops, with mires, areas of lowland meadow, calcareous grassland and lowland dry acid grassland in the river valleys. Bluebell woods occur in places.
- Nationally rare, locally abundant and prominent ridge and furrow, with frequent deserted and shrunken settlements. Several large historic country estates such as Cottesbrooke Hall and Althorp and many small country estates, with extensive parkland containing a great many mature, veteran and ancient trees.
- Nucleated villages often on hill tops or at valley heads with low densities of dispersed settlement. Cob, ironstone and limestone in older buildings with some remaining thatch, but mostly pantile and slate roofs. Brick buildings in some villages. Extensive new developments in villages along main transport corridors and in the two main towns.
- A dense network of narrow lanes with wide grassy verges, often following ridges, crossed by many strategic road and rail corridors, including the M1, M40, A14, West Coast Main Line railway, Great Western Railway line and the Oxford and Grand Union canals.
- The many historic houses, parks and gardens open to the public, the reservoirs, long-distance paths (such as the Knightley Way, Jurassic Way and Brampton Valley Way) and the Grand Union and Oxford canals provide well-used recreation assets.