

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment



Wroxton Motor X

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Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
	LOCATION	1
	STUDY AREA	1
	EXISTING DEVELOPMENT	1
2.	BASELINE AND EVALUATION.....	2
	STUDY AREA	2
	LANDSCAPE CHARACTER	3
	VISUAL RECEPTORS WITHIN THE STUDY AREA	8
	Visual Impacts	16
	LANDSCAPE CHARACTER	23
	VISUAL AMENITY	23
	Table A: Landscape Character Index – Key Characteristics/Special Qualities	
	Evaluation Tables	24
	METHODOLOGY	25
	Landscape Assessment	25
	Landscape Sensitivity	26
	Landscape Impact Assessment:.....	28
	Visual Assessment	31
	Sensitivity of Visual Receptors	31
	ABBREVIATIONS AND GLOSSARY OF TERMS	32

REFERENCES

Figures and Photographs – 024_120 Wroxton Motor X Track Figure Sheets

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Steele Landscape Design Consultants have been commissioned to prepare a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for an existing motor X track with periodic events held throughout the year. The land that forms part of the agricultural land to the north of Stratford Road (A422) and is approx. 3km to the west of Wroxton village. This assessment will identify the specific impacts raised by the motor X track; consider the effects of these impacts upon landscape character and the visual amenity of the area. The report outlines appropriate landscape enhancement/mitigation measures that would help minimise the impact to the physical landscape and features of the site itself as well as the landscape character and visual amenity of the study area.
- 1.2 This report will concentrate on the landscape character and visual amenity of the local countryside from the existing motor X track and will also comment on the operational activities i.e., the transient short stay motor homes that are part of the infrequent sports events.
- 1.3 This report has been prepared to support a retrospective planning application to be submitted to Cherwell District Council.

LOCATION

- 1.4 The context maps in the Viewpoints and ZVI document - 024-120 show the location and context of the application site as well as the extent of the study area. The motor X site is a 'mud' track that winds around an agricultural field. The motor x site has minimal

amenities including mobile toilets and small timber shelters (2m x 2m) for the race marshals during race days. The only infrastructure is the stoned access track into the site from Bells Road.

- 1.5 The motor x track is contained within a single undulating field that adds banks and dips into a challenging course. There have been motor x activities on this site for the last 40 years and events are strictly control to a prescribed number per year.

STUDY AREA

- 1.6 The study area covers a 2km radius, radiating out from the approximate centre of the site as shown in the Viewpoints and ZVI document - 024-120. This study area has been defined as the furthest distance that the proposed development would be discernible within the local countryside. The study area is considered to be a suitable distance for an initial desktop study of the local topography and confirmed as an appropriate distance to carry out a field evaluating of views available within this study area.

EXISTING DEVELOPMENT

- 1.7 The existing motor x track is located in an agricultural field with access into and out of the site from Bell Street – to the east of the site. The access track is approx. 600 metres long and on event days adequately accommodates the waiting traffic into the site.
- 1.8 The motor X track uses the natural landform which rises and falls throughout the field. There are large grass areas to the south and east of the track that accommodate the motorhomes for short stays.

2. BASELINE AND EVALUATION

STUDY AREA

- 3.1. The site occupies a single large field, classed as 'agricultural use' but currently turned used as a motor X track. As the track is technically a mud circuit there would be little difficulty returning the field back to agricultural grassland.
- 3.2. The motor X track is located to the north of Stratford Road (A422) and with direct access from Bell Street to the east of the site. There are several local footpaths within the study area and also D'Arcy Dalton Way which is a long-distance recreational route.
- 3.3. Although the field boundaries to the track are post and wire the majority of local field and road way boundaries are well maintained mature hedgerows with many tall trees spared throughout. There are several large blocks and linear belts of woodland within close proximity to the site including the woodland along the northern site boundary and Ragnall wood to the east and New covert to the north-west. Trees heights within hedgerows and woodlands tend to be mature and approx. 14-16 metres and create a dense visual screen to long distance views.
- 3.4. The motor X track is an undulating field and forms part of the upper valley section of a local tributary that flows to the east. The site levels vary throughout the site with levels along the northern edge follow the fall of the small stream from approx. 158m AOD in the north-western corner and rising to 149m AOD in the north-east corner. Levels along the southern boundary vary from 166m AOD in the south-western corner and 165m AOD in the southern area around the access track. The levels within the local study area also vary from 195m AOD to the north-west, 157m AOD to the north-east, 158m AOD to south-west and 168m AOD to south -east.
- 3.5. There are no buildings or areas of hard standing within the site and only a single access track. The majority of the surrounding countryside is agricultural fields used for arable and livestock production. There are several dwellings within the immediate area including Hornton Grounds to the north-west and several properties along Bell Street to the east.
- 3.6. This report will focus on impacts of the existing motor X track on locations that are within the public domain i.e. local roads, footpaths and local amenity areas; private residential areas or National Trust Gardens have restricted access and cannot be assessed. There are other larger residential areas within 2km of the site and these include Hornton (north), Horley (north-east), Wroxton (east), Balscote (south-east) and Shenington (west). The local villages are relatively distant from the site and local topography and local hedges and trees forma physical and visual screen from the motor X track.
- 3.7. A desktop review of the study area was undertaken including analysis of Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) data sets and Cherwell Council District Local Plan. The review identified that the following receptors and statutory landscape designations fall within the 2km radius study area. Locations are shown in Viewpoints and ZVI document - 024-120.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

National Landscape Character

3.8. The 'Character of England Landscape, Wildlife and Cultural Features Map' was produced in 2005 by The Countryside Agency. This map subdivides England into Joint Character Areas (JCA's) providing a picture of the differences in landscape character at the national/regional scale. These have since been reviewed and updated by Natural England (2012-2015) and categorised into National Character Area (NCA) Profiles. These profiles do contain Key Characteristics but at this *broad scale the site proposals would have little effect on NCA 95, so will not be taken forward into the assessment.* They have been included for reference.

Local Landscape Character

3.9. Broader Landscape Character Assessments which wash over the site area have been carried out by Cherwell District Council (Cherwell Landscape Assessment by CRC 1995) and Oxfordshire County Council 'Oxfordshire wildlife and Landscape Study' (OWLS) 2004. The OWLS study is more comprehensive and recent. Within the OWLS study, the site is identified within a '**24. WOODED PASTURE VALLEYS & SLOPES**' landscape type. The overview and key characteristics are described as:

3.10. **Name: 24. WOODED PASTURE VALLEYS & SLOPES**

Northamptonshire Uplands, Cotswolds, Chilterns.

The site is located solely within this LCT and makes up the majority of the study area.

Description: The landscape type extends over the narrow valleys in the Ironstone area around Wroxton and Shenington, the valleys of the rivers Glyme and Dorn in the Cotswolds, the tributary valleys of the river Windrush and the dry valleys to the south of the Chilterns.

This landscape type includes pastoral and wooded landscapes associated with the steep slopes and valleys of small streams and main rivers.

Key characteristics

- Steep sided valleys and slopes.
- Large, interlocking blocks of ancient and plantation woodland
- Small pasture fields with localised unimproved grassland
- Tall, thick hedges and densely scattered hedgerow trees
- Small intact villages and hamlets

Effected: YES

The Motor X track causes a direct changes to the landscape character of this Regional LCT, in particular the farmland forms part of the plateau with numerous undulating features that make up the surrounding countryside. The 'Motor X' events occur periodically throughout the year however, the land is considered to remain in agricultural use when not used for 'Motor X' events.

There are no permanent buildings within the Motor X site other than the Race Marshall shelters and mobile toilets.

The scale, massing and size of the Motor X events area would be seen in greater context with that of the neighbouring agricultural farmland, mineral extraction pits and blocks of woodland.

Receptor Type: Landscape

Susceptibility: MEDIUM

The proposed development has undue consequences on the existing site and surrounding LCA.

Value: Community

No formal landscape recognition or landscape designation for the site or surrounding landscape. The site and the surrounding landscape of the study area are a good example of the landscape character description in the Regional LCA profile.

Sensitivity to Change: **LOW-MEDIUM**

- 3.11. **Name:** **6. FARMLAND PLATEAU**
Cotswolds and Northamptonshire Uplands.
- 3.12. **Approx. distance from Site:** 500m north-west of the site and covering a quarter of the study area.

This landscape type covers the plateau across the elevated northern part of the county.
- 3.13. **Description:** This landscape type is characterised by a high limestone plateau with a distinctive elevated and exposed character, broad skies and long distance views. Large scale arable fields dominate the landscape, with some medium-sized plantations partially obscuring the otherwise open views.
- 3.14. **Key characteristics**
- Level or gently rolling open ridges dissected by narrow valleys and broader vales.
 - Large, regular arable fields enclosed by low thorn hedges and limestone walls.

- Rectilinear plantations and shelterbelts.
- Sparsely settled landscape with a few nucleated settlements.
- Long, straight roads running along the ridge summits.

Effectuated: **NO**

From field observations it has been established that the landscape character of this LCA would not be effected by the proposed development as the two areas are separated by local topography and vegetation.

Therefore, this LCT will not require further impacts assessment.

Landscape Character Summary - SITE

- 3.15. According to Magic the site is in the Wroxton Parish, however it is bordering the neighbouring Hornton Parish area, to the north. The site is classed as agricultural land that is strongly associated with the sport of Motor X. The site is typical of surrounding landscape including the following: undulating field pattern with dense and mature hedges and blocks of woodland.
- 3.16. As the site is located some distance from any residential dwellings and residential areas (Wroxton and Hornton) the proposed development would be seldom seen except from footpaths that border to the west of the site and within 500 metres within the surrounding countryside,

INDIVIDUAL LANDSCAPE RECEPTORS

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

3.17. **Name: Cotswolds**

Size: 2041 km²

Approx. distance: 1km NW of Wroxton motor x site.

Description: The Cotswold AONB is a very large area of countryside that stretches from Trowbridge (Wiltshire) in the south to Tewksbury (Gloucestershire) NW and Woodstock (Oxfordshire) to the west.

A finger of AONB extends to the NW along a continually slender finger of high ground that terminates near to Edge Hill, Ratley (Warwickshire) situated approx. 4km to the north of the Motor X site. A small area of AONB includes the estate of Upton House which is approximately 2.5km to the north-west of the Motor X site and this issue has been addressed within the 'Registered Park and Gardens'.

The Cotswolds AONB - Landscape Character Assessment (2013) defines the landscape within the AONB area as part of 6A and 6B Ironstone Hills and Valleys.

Effectuated: NO

From field observations it has been established that the landscape character of the Cotswold AONB is not affected by the Motor X site due to intervening topography, local buildings and tall vegetation.

Therefore, this Landscape receptor will not require further impact assessment.

Settlement Pattern

3.18. **Name: Wroxton**

Size: Small village

Approx. distance from Site: Within 3lms of the site.

Description: The town is located to the south east of the site and at similar elevations (approx. 150 m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). The eastern edge of the village overlooks a small valley of wooded hillsides with Wroxton Abbey.

Effectuated: NO

Residential properties within Wroxton would not be affected by the Motor X track on the site due to intervening buildings and tall vegetation etc.

Effectuated: No

Due to intervening topography, local buildings and tall vegetation.

Therefore, this will not require further impacts assessment.

3.19. **Name: Hornton**

Size: Small village

Approx. distance from Site: 1km to the north of the site

Description: The majority of the village is set within the northern and southern flanks of a small valley.

Effectuated: No

Due to intervening topography, local buildings, and tall vegetation.

Therefore, this will not require further impacts assessment.

- 3.20. **Name: Horley**
Size: Small village
Approx. distance from Site: approx. 3km to the east of the site
Description: The majority of the village is set on the east facing slopes and set below 170m AOD.
Effectuated: No
Due to intervening topography, local buildings, and tall vegetation.
Therefore, this LCT will not require further impacts assessment.
- 3.21. **Name: Balscote**
Size: Small village
Approx. distance from Site: 2km to the south of the site.
Description: The village is mainly to found on the southern facing slopes of a small valley.
Effectuated: No
Due to intervening topography, local buildings, and tall vegetation.
Therefore, this will not require further impacts assessment.
- 3.22. **Name: Shenington**
Size: Small village
Approx. distance from Site: Approx, 2km to the west of the site/
Description: The village is located on the western facing slopes of a low lying valley. The majority of the buildings are located between 140-175 m AOD.
Effectuated: No
Due to intervening topography, local buildings, and tall vegetation.
Therefore, this will not require further impacts assessment.

Registered Park and Gardens

- 3.23. **Name: Upton House**
Approx. distance from Site: Approx. 2.5 km to the NW of the site.
Description: The house and gardens are located on the north west of the site. The house and gardens consist of a main house and pleasure grounds with formal gardens to the south of the House, with further informal pleasure grounds to the south-east and in the valley to the west. The main house and landscaped gardens are set within a mature woodland with the house located at the centre of two designed vistas that stretch out to the north-east and south-west with no views of the Motor X track.
Effectuated: No
The south-eastern grounds of the Upton House estate are defined by a ridge line covered with mature linear woodland belt; there are no views from the estate of the Motor X site.
Therefore, due to intervening topography, local buildings and tall vegetation the house and grounds would not be affected by the Motor X site or periodic activities etc.
Therefore, this will not require further impacts assessment.

SITE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Use/Land Cover

- 3.24. At the time of writing the LVIA, the single field was set out as a motor X track but due to COVID-19 restrictions not actively used.
- 3.25. The motor X track makes up the majority of the sites and the remaining site is grassland and used as parking for the associated camper vans during the event days.

Topography/Landform

- 3.26. The site is located in a field that is undulating in character with the lowest areas (148 m AOD) at the north-east corner which is adjacent to a small stream. The highest parts of the site are located along the western and southern boundary with heights between 160-166 m AOD.
- 3.27. The site has identifiable features that are strongly associated with the landscape character of study area such as undulating land which forms a valley enclosed by ridges

Landscape Features

- 3.28. As the site is primary a 'dirt track' and there are very few features on site. There are two small ponds used as reservoirs to be used to attenuate surface water run-off and catch sediment. All boundaries are mainly post and wire fence with the exception of the northern boundary which is a small stream and mature woodland block. Also, the access track from Bell Road has a mature native species hedge along the SW edge.

VISUAL RECEPTORS WITHIN THE STUDY AREA

- 3.29. It is also important to understand and identify the existing users (or visual receptors) of the landscape within the Study Area to establish the potential changes to the visual amenity of those users as a result of the proposed development.
- 3.30. The Wroxton Motor X track is an established feature in the local landscape and has been operating within this field for the last 40 years and with numerous race events held throughout the race season. The track is a 'basic' dirt track that utilises the fields existing undulations to make a noteworthy race track. When not being used as a motor x track the field is used for sheep grazing on the grass areas used to park camper vans.
- 3.31. The existing visibility of the application site was initially assessed by a desktop study of Ordnance Survey explorer map in order to establish the extent to which the existing motor X track affects the visual amenity of the study area. A plan outlining a general 'Zone of Theoretical Visibility' (ZTV), was based on a 2km radius Ordnance Survey map of the area and used as a desktop tool to identify local roads, footpath networks, residential areas and large blocks of woodland.
- 3.32. To ensure a complete and accurate representation of the existing effects of the motor X track a field survey was undertaken on 26 February 2021. The fieldwork analysis of the visibility of the site from the surrounding landscape takes into account all those existing landscape features (hedges, woodlands, buildings, topography) that could considerably reduce visibility of the site.
- 3.33. A comprehensive number of viewpoint locations were proposed and agreed (15 February 2021) by Tim Screen (Cherwell Landscape Officer). The viewpoint locations were tested and a photographic record was taken from each relevant location. The object of the field study was to determine which locations offer the clearest views of the site from locations accessible to the public.
- 3.34. After an exhaustive field survey was conducted 'The Zone of Visual Influence' (ZVI) has been defined as the extent of where 'elements' of the existing motor X track were visible based on field observations of the topography and existing landscape features including blocks of woodland, trees, hedgerows and buildings etc. The subsequent ZVI map has been coloured orange to denote the extent of visibility. The ZVI shows that there are a limited number of publicly accessible vantage points that will have either, a full or partial view of the motor X track. Vantage points with views of the motor X track are from a very few locations mainly the PRow or adjacent road ways.

Visual Environment and Nature of Views

- 3.35. The ZTV is shown within 024_120 Figure Sheet and this has been used to assist the process of identifying the broad extent of site visibility and subsequently the location of potential views of the proposals. Field work has then been used to confirm the nature of any visual barriers and their influence on the sites actual visibility from the surrounding area, which gives us the Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI).

- 3.36. The photographic survey is shown within Viewpoint document - 024-120. The overall visibility of the application site can be summarised as:

From the study area, the site is screened from public views from the north, east and south by a combination of low-lying topography and/or vegetation along field hedges or roadside boundaries.

The majority of views of the site from the local countryside are from along local footpaths and within approx. 350m. These are views of the site that are seen in context with the wider countryside.

- 3.37. Further descriptions of the views are given on 024_120 Figure Sheet, photo-panels 1-4.

Settlements

- 3.38. **Name: Hornton, Horley, Wroxton, Balscote and Shenington**
- 3.39. Views from public spaces (greens, squares, parks etc.) within these villages are not available due to intervening buildings, topography and tall trees and hedges. Views from individual residential properties are not covered by the LVIA as they are private and not available to the public.

Effected: No

Due to intervening topography, local buildings, and tall vegetation.

Therefore, this will not require further impacts assessment.

Adjacent Properties

- 3.40. **Name: Hornton Grounds (farm)**
Approx. distance from Site: 0.5km to the north-west of the site.

Description: The access track to the farm house has been described in the Recreational Routes – D’Arcy Dalton Way.

The house is located on the southern section of a large enclosed courtyard within a complex of very large agricultural structures. The house has laid out gardens along the southern façade which is further enclosed by tall walls. Outside the house gardens are stretching to the south-west are mature trees, orchard and woodland belt. Further still, the views are restricted by tall field hedges and a ridgeline along which there is a mature hedgerow with numerous large and tall trees.

Effected: No

- 3.41. Views from the house and adjacent access track/footpath are also restricted by the intervening topography, local buildings, and tall woodland, hedgerows. Views from individual residential properties are not typically covered by the LVIA as they are private land with no access to the public.

Therefore, this will not require further impacts assessment.

Local Roads

- 3.42. Views from most of the public roads including Stratford, Quarry Road and Alkerton Lane within the study area are not available due to intervening topography, tall trees/hedge and buildings.
- 3.43. There are few other public local roads within the study. The two identified roads that are within the study area are Bell Road and Stratford Road.

Recreational Routes (024_120 Figure Sheet)

Long Distance Walking Routes

- 3.44. **Name:** D’Arcy Dalton Way (255/5/10–north-west)
Length: 106 km – Banbury to Swindon
Approx. distance from Site: 325 meters to the north-west

Description: To the north-west of the site the long-distance footpath follows the access track to Hornton Grounds and continues toward the north-east toward Hornton village. The track way from Stratford Road (A422) is relatively open with mostly views to the south and that are short distance (1km) in extent.

Effected: YES

Along this section of the **D’Arcy Dalton Way**, there is a single short section (200 metres) of footpath close to junction with Stratford Road (A422) that has an oblique view of the northern and western edges of the track. Along most of this footpath there are no views of the site as adjacent trees, vegetation and landform obscure any views.

As the walker continues north-east past the buildings of Hornton Grounds the oblique views are again screened by intervening woodland situated at the northern boundary of the site.

Receptor Type: Visual

Value: NATIONAL

Users: Recreational walkers with plenty of opportunity to linger and/or pause to appreciate the limited views of the surrounding open fields and wooded plateau.

Sensitivity to Change: MEDIUM-HIGH

Local Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

- 3.45. **Name:** 339/18/10 Footpath along NW site boundary
Length: Visible from 238 m of 1 km of footpath

Description: Access to this section of footpath is difficult to navigate as footpath follows an ‘anomalous’ route that is not recorded on the Oxfordshire Definitive Rights of Way Map.

The footpath should start at the side of Stratford Road from within the ‘Queen of India’ restaurant. However, this is not possible due to there being no finger post/direction, no footpath style in the fence and no means of getting down the 4 metre cliff down to the field.

However, there is a footpath that is located 250 metres south of the restaurant that uses a dangerous steep set of steps with dangerously rusted steel handrail down from the road bridge to the field below. The ‘footpath signs’ then direct walkers north and parallel with the road and joins (250m) onto the definitive footpath – 339/18/10. The footpath continues north-east and along the western boundary of the site. The footpath then continues NE across open fields towards Hornton village.

At the time of writing this report the Public Rights of Way officer confirm that there had been no diversion order validated for this section of the footpath.

However, for completeness the viewpoint has been included.

Effectuated: YES

This is a short section of footpath that runs in close proximity to the western boundary of the site.

Receptor Type: Visual

Value: LOCAL/COMMUNITY

Users: Recreational walkers with plenty of opportunity to linger and/or pause to appreciate views of the surrounding landscape.

Sensitivity to Change: MEDIUM-HIGH

- 3.46. **Name:** Un-named footpath from Stratford Rd/Hilary Bridge
Length: 250 metres - entire route length
Description: This footpath leads down from Stratford Road on a steep set of steps and then heads north along field boundary to connect with the footpath (339/18/10).

However, this is an un-validated footpath diversion that has not been consented by the landowner.

Effectuated: YES

Walking from the Hilary bridge the majority of the track is located in the 'lower' parts of the field and from this location cannot be seen. However, there are small sections of the track can be seen along the eastern and southern edge.

Parking Area – During the 'event days' there would be a number of camper vans parked in the grass fields along the south-western and south-eastern boundary. The event days are held approx. 24 days per year and during the remaining days of the year there would be no camper vans to be seen within the site.

Receptor Type: Visual

Value: LOCAL/COMMUNITY

Users: Recreational walkers have plenty of opportunity to linger and/or pause to appreciate views.

Sensitivity to Change: MEDIUM

- 3.47. **Name:** 418/14/10 Footpath
Length visible: 200m of 640 metres
Approx. distance from Site: 400 meters to the south

Description: The footpath runs east-west through an adjacent field that is located to the south of the site. However, the footpath cannot be assessed as it is not accessible from either Stratford Road or Bell Road. There are no finger points location the route and there is a 4m drop between the road edge and the field below.

Therefore, this will not require further impacts assessment.

Roadways (024_120 Figure Sheet)

- 3.48. **Name:** Bell Road
Length: 2.5 km
Approx. distance from Site: 350 meters to the east

Description: To the south-east of the site this local road passes within 350 metres of the site before continuing to Hornton village.

There is a short section (150m) of roadway where there are views of the access track and eastern edge of the site. The view toward the site soon diminishes behind intervening tall trees and also nearby ridge line.

Effectuated: YES

Along this section of Bell Road, at the junction of the site access track there is a short section (150 metres) of roadway close to junction with that have oblique views of the site as the vehicle navigates this right handed corner.

Receptor Type: Visual

Value: LOCAL

Users: Recreational walkers and those traveling in local vehicles with plenty of opportunity to linger and/or pause to appreciate the limited views of the surrounding open fields and wooded plateau.

Sensitivity to Change: LOW-MEDIUM

SENSITIVITY OF VISUAL AMENITY WITHIN THE STUDY AREA

Visual Amenity SUMMARY

- 3.49. The Wroxton Motor X track is an established feature in the local landscape and has been operating within this field for the last 40 years and with numerous race events held throughout the race season. When not being used as a motor x track the field is used for sheep grazing on the grass areas used to park camper vans.
- 3.50. The ZVI in the accompanying 024_120 Viewpoint Figure Sheet document illustrates the extent that which views of the site are

mostly restricted to small 'sections' of publicly accessible footpaths located within 250 metres from the site boundary.

- 3.51. In summary, views from short sections of the publicly accessible D'Arcy Dalton Way (long distance footpath) that runs to the NE of the site and will have **MEDIUM-HIGH Sensitivity**.
- 3.52. Views from publicly accessible local footpath that are located directly adjacent (within 250 metres) to the site would have **MEDIUM Sensitivity**.
- 3.53. The receptors in the study area that are most relevant to the proposed development in Visual Amenity terms are:
- D'Arcy Dalton Way - NW of the site
 - PRoW – Adjacent to NW site boundary
 - PRoW south of the site

Table 1: Summary of Receptor Sensitivity (Landscape and Visual)

Receptor	Sensitivity
Study Area – Landscape	
24. Wooded Pasture Valleys & Slopes LCT	LOW-MEDIUM
Study Area - Visual	
Footpath: 255/05/10 - D'Arcy Dalton Way	MEDIUM-HIGH
Footpath: 339/18/10 -Adjacent to site	MEDIUM-HIGH
Un-named Footpath: Stratford Rd/Hilary Bridge	MEDIUM
Roadway: Bell Road – South-east of site	LOW-MEDIUM

4. ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING MOTOR X TRACK

DESIGN APPROACH

- 4.1. This LVIA report has been written in support of the planning application which seeks to consolidate the extent of the existing Wroxton Motor X track within agricultural land owned by the client. The existing site is approx. 7 hectares and for most of the year the track is not used and there is little or no activity on site apart for sheep grazing. Event days account for 60 days spread throughout the race season.
- 4.2. However, on the race day events the racing teams use the southern and eastern sections of the field to park their camper vans for overnight accommodation. These vehicles are approx. 2.6m high and there is a restriction of numbers to approx. 250 at any one given time.
- 4.3. The site is accessed from Bell Road via a single lane track and camper vans typically flow straight into the site or park for a short time on the track whilst waiting instructions to proceed.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Primary Mitigation

- 4.4. Primary mitigation measures are existing features on site that already limit the potential effects of the track and the activities during a race event; these include:
- Retain and protect the existing boundary hedgerows along the access track and along Bell Road. Ongoing management would be proposed to allow the hedge to grow and be maintained at 3m.

Secondary Mitigation

- 4.5. The following secondary mitigation measures would be proposed in order to further reduce the effects of the existing activities.
- Along the western, southern and eastern boundaries a hedge would be planted with native species. These hedges would be allowed to grow and maintained at 3 metres.
 - Additional, tree planting (approx. 1.5m-2m high) positioned at critical locations on the southern and eastern boundary to further screen the effects of the onsite activities on views from sensitive locations.
 - Hedges along Bell Road and the access track to have 'infill' planting with native species and be allowed to grow and maintained at 3 metres.
- Note: Tree species have been specified at 1.5-2m tall (half standard). The tree size is to ensure that the tree will survive in the free draining soil structure as the field is a restored ironstone open-cast site.
- Hedge species– Hazel, Hawthorn, Holly, oak and Dog Rose.
Trees Species – Oak, Beech and Birch.

POTENTIAL EFFECTS - Permanent Residual Effects

- 4.6. The changes outlined in the primary and secondary mitigation would take several years to fully screen the track and also the activities during a race event. With careful management the following effects would be achieved through the establishment and growth of vegetation and would result in permanent effects:
- The tall (3m tall) hedge line to corner of the Bell Road would screen all views of the track and camper vans during race days
 - New native hedge with occasional trees (1.5m-2m high) to be planted along the western, southern and eastern boundaries would screen views of track and parked camper vans

5. LANDSCAPE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. This section identifies impacts caused by the existing track and camper vans during race days on the local landscape. The significance of effects is considered at the residual phase.
- 5.2. The impact assessment is conducted in accordance with the definitions/criteria described in this document, and follows the report structure by assessing impacts on:
- Receptors including landscape designations, if required;
 - Landscape Character;
 - Landscape elements, feature and characteristics;

Table 2: Summary of Predicted Effects on Landscape

Receptor	Sensitivity to Change	Existing Impact	Mitigation	Significance of Effect (Residual)
Study Area				
Landscape Character Area: 24 - WOODED PASTURE VALLEYS & SLOPES	MEDIUM	<p>LOW-MEDIUM</p> <p>The Wroxton Motor X track is <u>a small scale, permanent effect on local area.</u></p> <p>The Track</p> <p>This is a recognisable local feature in this LCA and as the track follows the main contours of the local area there are only small sections of the elevated track that are visible.</p>	<p>LOW</p> <p>New boundary (western, southern and eastern) hedge planted with a native species and allowed to grow and be maintained at 3m tall.</p>	<p>SLIGHT, Adverse</p> <p>The residual impacts after the mitigation measure have taken effect would significantly reduce the existing impact of the existing track and parked camper vans.</p> <p>From the adjacent countryside the track and parked vehicles would not be experienced as a dominant feature in its own right.</p>

Receptor	Sensitivity to Change	Existing Impact	Mitigation	Significance of Effect (Residual)
	MEDIUM	<p data-bbox="488 373 645 402">Camper vans</p> <p data-bbox="488 429 981 572">Race event days would introduce a number of camper vans onto the site and this would be seen as a more noticeable but temporary change.</p> <p data-bbox="488 600 981 703">The camper vans during race days are <u>a small scale, short term effect on local area.</u></p>	<p data-bbox="1014 320 1160 349">NEGLIGIBLE</p> <p data-bbox="1014 376 1563 520">New boundary (western, southern and eastern) hedge planted with a native species and allowed to grow and be maintained at 3m tall.</p> <p data-bbox="1014 547 1563 767">Additional native tree (1-5m -2m high) would be planted along the norther, southern and eastern boundary to supplement the proposed hedgerow and would provide increased screening to the track and parked camper vans during race events.</p>	<p data-bbox="1597 320 1697 349">Neutral</p> <p data-bbox="1597 376 2112 520">The residual impacts after the mitigation measure have taken effect would significantly reduce the existing impact of the existing track and parked camper vans.</p> <p data-bbox="1597 547 2112 687">From the adjacent countryside the track and parked vehicles would not be experienced as a dominant feature in its own right.</p>

6. **VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1. This section assesses visual impacts on visual receptors grouped using the receptor sensitivity established in the Baseline against the Magnitude of Change in views from these receptors.
- 6.2. This starts by summarising the scale of effects of specific viewpoints throughout the study area which are then used as visual aids to judge the effect on visual receptors. These viewpoints provide a 'sample' of potential effects, representing a wide range of receptors – including not only those actually at the viewpoint, but also those nearby, at a similar distance and/or direction.

Visual Impacts

- 5.3. As can be seen by the ZTV (see document 024_120 Wroxton Motor X ZTV Figure Sheet), the site is visually well contained by the local undulating topography, woodland blocks as well hedgerows with tall trees that all contribute to aid in the screening of the site. The main visual receptors will be from the footpaths and locations to the east, south and west. However, as determined by the field survey there are all but a small handful of locations where the site can be seen from.
- 5.4. Therefore, views of the site are from locations within approx. 350 metres of the site boundary and from locations along footpaths running to the west and south of the site.

Table 3: Scale of Effects on Viewpoint Location

VP no.	Viewpoint Location	Activity	Scale of Effect		Rationale
			After Planting	Residual	
VP 1	D’Arcy Dalton Way (255/05/10) 325 metres from the western site boundary.	Track	Low	Negligible	The footpath begins at Stratford Road (A422) and the first 200 metres of footpath has an oblique view of the western and southern boundaries.
		Race Days medium scale, short term effect localised to a single section of the footpath.	Low	Negligible	Over time the maturing hedge and trees along the western site boundary would mature and ‘fill out’ to ensure that the effects of the track and temporary camper vans would be screened from the adjoining countryside.
VP 2	PRoW 255/4/10 Adjacent to NW site boundary	Track	Medium	Low	The footpath begins after leaving Stratford Road (A422) and for most of this footpath there are no significant views of the track. Not until walkers pass directly adjacent to the western boundary of the track would a walker experience the track and the activities.
		Race Days large scale, short term effect localised to a single section of the footpath.	Medium	Low	Over time the maturing hedge and trees along the site boundary would ‘fill out’ to ensure that the effects of the track and temporary camper vans would be screened and therefore, improve the integration into the adjoining countryside.

Table 3: Scale of Effects on Viewpoint Location

VP no.	Viewpoint Location	Activity	Scale of Effect		Rationale
			After Planting	Residual	
VP 3	PRoW 418/14/10/ Hilary Bridge 400 metres from the southern site boundary	Track	Low	Negligible	The footpath begins after leaving Stratford Road (A422) and for most of this footpath there are no significant views of the track. Over time the maturing hedge and trees along the site boundary would ‘fill out’ to ensure that the effects of the track and temporary camper vans would be screened and therefore, improve the integration into the adjoining countryside.
		Race Days	Negligible-Low	Negligible	
VP 4	Bell Road (corner) 350 metres from the eastern site boundary	Track	Low	Negligible	From the local Bell Road there is a short section approx. 150 metres where there is an oblique view of the eastern site boundary. The view of the track is very partially but mostly screened by the foreground topography. Over time the maturing hedge and trees along the site boundary would ‘fill out’ to ensure that the effects of the track and temporary camper vans would be screened and therefore, improve the integration into the adjoining countryside.
		Race Days	Low	Negligible	
		medium scale, short term effect localised to a single section of the roadway.			

Table 4: Summary of Predicted Effects on Visual Receptors				
Receptor	Sensitivity to Change	Existing Impacts	Mitigation	Significance of Effect (Residual)
D’Arcy Dalton Way (255/05/10) (VP 1 - Long distance footpath)	Medium-High	Track = Low/Medium There is a single short section (approx. 200m) of the footpath that has an oblique view of parts of the elevated track. Parts of the elevated track are perceptible/noticeable in the countryside when viewed from across adjacent fields. This would result in a small/medium scale, long term effect limited to a single section of the footpath.	= Negligible/Low The proposed hedgerow with trees will be planted along the north-western – see Landscaping Plan PL-03. The magnitude of the existing impacts would reduce to Negligible/Low magnitude.	Minimal Adverse In time the track would not be seen due to the dense screening of the hedge and trees.
		Race Days = Low There is a singular short section (approx. 200m) of the footpath that have oblique views of the camper vans during race days. The camper vans are noticeable in the countryside when viewed from across the adjacent fields. This would result in a medium scale, short term effect limited to a single section of the footpath.	= Negligible The proposed hedgerow with trees will be planted along the north-western – see Landscaping Plan PL-03. The magnitude of the existing impacts would reduce resulting in a Negligible magnitude.	Neutral In time the camper vans parking in the site during the race days would not be seen due to the dense screening of the hedge and trees.

Table 4: Summary of Predicted Effects on Visual Receptors				
Receptor	Sensitivity to Change	Existing Impacts	Mitigation	Significance of Effect (Residual)
PRoW 255/4/10 (VP2 - Footpath in close proximity to NW site boundary.)	Medium High	Track = Medium There is a single short section (400m) of the footpath that has an oblique view of parts of the track. The track is a noticeable in the countryside when viewed from the north-western boundary of the site. This would result in a medium, long term effect limited to a single section of the footpath as it passes the north-western boundary of the site.	= LOW The proposed hedgerow with trees will be planted along the western boundary – see Landscaping Plan PL-03. The magnitude of the existing impacts would reduce resulting in a Low magnitude.	Slight Adverse In time the track would not be seen due to the dense screening of the hedge and trees.
		Race Days = Low There is a singular short section (400m) of the footpath that have oblique views of the camper vans during race days. The camper vans are noticeable in the countryside when viewed from across the field. This would result in a Medium scale, short term effect limited to a single section of the footpath.	= Negligible The proposed hedgerow with trees will be planted along the north-western – see Landscaping Plan PL-03. The magnitude of the existing impacts would reduce resulting in a Negligible magnitude.	Neutral In time the camper vans during the race days would not be seen due to the dense screening of the hedge and trees.

Table 4: Summary of Predicted Effects on Visual Receptors				
Receptor	Sensitivity to Change	Existing Impacts	Mitigation	Significance of Effect (Residual)
PRoW 418/14/10 VP 3 - Footpath approx. 400 metres from the southern site boundary)	Medium	Track = Low There is a single short section (400m) of the footpath that has an oblique view of parts of the track. The track is perceptible in the countryside when viewed from across the adjoining fields to the south of the site. This would result in a small scale, long term effect localised to a single section of the footpath.	= Negligible The proposed hedgerow with trees will be planted along the southern boundary – see Landscaping Plan PL-03. The magnitude of the existing impacts would reduce resulting in a Negligible magnitude.	Neutral In time the track would not be seen due to the dense screening of the hedge and trees.
		Race Days = Low There is a singular short section (400m) of the footpath that have oblique views of the camper vans during race days. The camper vans are noticeable in the countryside when viewed from across the field. This would result in a medium scale, short term effect limited to a single section of the footpath.	= Negligible The proposed hedgerow with trees will be planted along the north-western – see Landscaping Plan PL-03. The magnitude of the existing impacts would reduce resulting in a Negligible magnitude.	Neutral In time the camper vans during the race days would not be seen due to the dense screening of the hedge and trees.

Table 4: Summary of Predicted Effects on Visual Receptors				
Receptor	Sensitivity to Change	Existing Impacts	Mitigation	Significance of Effect (Residual)
Bell Road (Corner) (VP 4 - Roadway approx. 400 metres from the eastern site boundary)	Low	Track = Low There is a single short section (400m) of the roadway that has an oblique view of parts of the track. The track is perceptible in the countryside when viewed from the roadway. This would result in a small scale, long term effect limited to a single section of the roadway.	= Negligible The proposed hedgerow with trees will be planted along the eastern boundary – see Landscaping Plan PL-03. The magnitude of the existing impacts would reduce. This would result in a Negligible magnitude that is -small scale, permanent effect within very local effect.	Neutral In time the track would not be seen due to the dense screening of the hedge and trees.
		Race Days = Low There is a singular short section (400m) of the footpath that have oblique views of the camper vans during race days. The camper vans are noticeable in the countryside when viewed from across the field. This would result in a medium scale, short term effect limited to a single section of the footpath.	= Negligible The proposed hedgerow with trees will be planted along the north-western – see Landscaping Plan PL-03. The magnitude of the existing impacts would reduce resulting in a Negligible magnitude.	Neutral In time the camper vans during the race days would not be seen due to the dense screening of the hedge and trees.

7. CONCLUSION

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- 7.1. The Wroxton Motor X is an established landscape feature in the landscape and the venue has been in operation for the last 40 years (approx.) with regular race day events held throughout the year. The track has been specially designed to be incorporated into the existing site levels which make the track a popular and challenging race circuit. As most of the track is set below the surrounding landscape level there are only small sections of the track visible from adjacent countryside.
- 7.2. The site and the study area are located within the 'Wooded Pasture' Landscape Character Type and the baseline concluded that it has a **Medium Sensitivity**.
- 7.3. As the site has two distinct periods of activity, this report has where appropriate described the effects into two parts a) the track and b) race day activities. However, due to Covid restrictions there are no scheduled race events and it has not been possible to photograph and assess the potential impacts. What is known is that there will be approx. 250 camper vans which are 2.9 metres high that will be parked in the grass areas to the southern and eastern boundaries.
- 7.4. The extent to which the site can be experienced in the study area has been determined to be from short sections of public footpaths/public highway within close proximity (up to 400m) of the site.
- 7.5. The mitigation measure within the Landscape Plan PL03 has proposed a native hedge to be planted along the western, southern

and eastern boundaries with additional tree (1.5m-2m high) planting. The trees are to be located at specific locations along the hedge to aid initial screening of the elevated sections of the track as well as to connect the site with the mature woodland to the north of the site. After the mitigation measures have matured, the impact to the track and during race events to the character of the local landscape would be an overall **Negligible/Low Adverse**.

VISUAL AMENITY

- 7.6. There are several footpaths located within 400m of the site and these would to lesser or greater extent have views of the site. Footpath (339/18/10) runs for a short length along the NW boundary of the site and would have clear views of the track and race day activities.
- 7.7. The baseline study concluded that the visual amenity of the study area has an overall **Medium Sensitivity** and the magnitude of the track and race day activities being **Low-Medium**. After the mitigation measures have matured the residual impact significance would be **Neutral to Slight Adverse**.
- 7.8. As the hedge and trees mature the site would be regarded as a continuation of the surrounding woodland and pasture landscape and not be experienced as a prominent feature in its own right.
- 7.9. It is therefore considered, that in the main the impacts of the proposed development are restricted to users of the PROW's in very close proximity of the site. In the study area and over time (5-10 years) the development site would continue to accommodate the proposed development without significant effects within the study area.

Table A: Landscape Character Index – Key Characteristics/Special Qualities Evaluation Tables

County: Oxfordshire County Council ‘Oxfordshire wildlife and Landscape Study’ (OWLS) 2004.	
24. WOODED PASTURE VALLEYS & SLOPES	
Relevant Key Characteristics	Relevance to study area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steep sided valleys and slopes. 	<p>Within the study area the site and surrounding landscape exhibit these characteristics especially found in the site and adjacent Hornton village that is located in a valley setting</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large, interlocking blocks of ancient and plantation woodland 	<p>There is a small woodland on the northern boundary of the site as well as other woodland blocks around Hornton Grounds as well as along Bell Road. These tend to isolated woodlands with defined edges to fields or roadways etc.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small pasture fields with localised unimproved grassland 	<p>For most of the year the site is maintained for grazing (where possible) sheep and the surrounding land mostly arable with some horse paddocks.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tall, thick hedges and densely scattered hedgerow trees 	<p>There are some remnant hedgerows on site but most hedges have been removed due to the ironstone extraction on the site and neighbouring fields. Local fields with boundaries onto roadways (Stratford Road and Bell Road) tend to be overgrown hedges with tall trees that screen views into the wider landscape.</p>

METHODOLOGY

The landscape and visual impact assessment deals with the separate but related issues of:

- **Landscape Character:** the effects of the development upon discrete character areas and/or character comprising features possessing a particular quality or merit: and
- **Visual Context:** the effects of the development on views from visual receptors, and upon the amenity value of the views.

This landscape and visual impact assessment has been carried out by the means of desktop and field studies. Initial analysis of maps studying existing landforms was undertaken to identify potential viewpoints. Panorama Digital Topographical Data was used to establish approximate heights within the application sites. Viewpoints and any other views identified during the fieldwork were then visited and assessed for their sensitivity to the proposed development.

The application site and surrounding area were visited during August 2020 where a series of photographs were taken from representative viewpoints. The viewpoint locations are shown on in 011_120 Viewpoint Figure Sheet.

All viewpoints were photographed using a Nikon D40 Digital SLR camera. The nature of the views are of relatively wide panoramas and it was therefore considered beneficial to present of the photographs in this way. The panoramic views consist of a number of photographic frames merged together. (All photographic technical information can be found alongside each individual viewpoint.)

Landscape Assessment

The sensitivity of a landscape is the degree to which change is able to be accommodated without unacceptable adverse effects upon character or change of character. The GLVIA guidelines indicate, however, that landscape sensitivity is not an absolute criterion and depends upon the nature of the development. Thus the assessment of sensitivity is not strictly part of the initial baseline study of landscape character. Landscapes of high sensitivity are at risk of having their key characteristics fundamentally altered by a particular development.

The magnitude of landscape effects depends upon the extent to which the landscape changes are perceptible in the wider context, whilst assessing the degree to which the fundamental elements of the landscape that give it its unique characteristics are affected.

Direct effects are those that actually change the physical characteristics of the identified elements that make up the landscape, such as the landform and land cover, whereas indirect effects are those which alter the perceptual characteristics of the landscape character, such as the tranquility and sense of remoteness.

Landscape Sensitivity

Sensitivity is categorised as high, medium, or low, according to the degree to which a particular landscape receptor can accommodate change arising from a particular development without detrimental effects on its character. This is judged by combining the **susceptibility** of individual landscape receptors to the type of change or development proposed with the **value** attached to that receptor through protection by designations or contribution at a local to national level.

Susceptibility indicates the ability of a receptor (landscape or visual) to accommodate the proposed development ‘*without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies or strategies*’. The susceptibility of a receptor is influenced by key characteristics, special qualities, purpose for designation and/or activity likely to be taking place. It is judged as:

- **High** – undue consequences are likely to arise from the proposed development.
- **Medium** – undue consequences may arise from the proposed development.
- **Low** – undue consequences are unlikely to arise from the proposed development.

Landscape/Receptor Value is ‘*the relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society*’. It is judged as:

- **National/International** – Designated landscapes which are nationally or internationally designated for their landscape value – including National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), World Heritage Sites, Heritage Coasts and National

Scenic Areas.

- **Local** – Locally or regionally designated landscapes such as Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). Also, areas which local evidence indicates as being more valued than the surrounding area.
- **Community** – ‘everyday’ landscape which is appreciated by the local community but has little or no wider recognition of its value.
- **Limited** – despoiled or degraded landscape with little or no evidence of being valued by the community.

Table B: Sensitivity Levels and Definitions.

Sensitivity Level	Landscape Resources
High	The key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are highly susceptible to change from the type of development being assessed.
Medium-High	The key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are susceptible to change from the type of development being assessed.
Medium	Some of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are susceptible to change from the type of development being assessed.
Low-Medium	Few of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are susceptible to change from the type of development being assessed.
Low	Key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are robust and are less likely to be adversely affected by the type of development being assessed.

It is also important to consider the value of the general wider landscape outside of landscape designations particularly where they are not present within the study area or to test their relevance to the specific site and/or study area in question. Judgments on landscape value consider the following factors:

- **Landscape Quality** (including physical state, visual intactness, functional intactness, ecological intactness and state of repair)
- **Scenic Quality** (primarily but not wholly visual sense)
- **Rarity**
- **Representativeness** (key characteristics as identified in the relevant landscape character assessment that are contained within the site and the surrounding area)
- **Conservation Interests** (features of wildlife, earth science, archaeological, historical and cultural interest)
- **Recreational Opportunity**
- **Perceptual Aspects** (such as wildness and tranquility)
- **Associations** (with particular people/events in history)

Table C: General Landscape Value.

Value	Typical Criteria	Typical Example
High	A clear composition of valued landscape components in a robust form and health, free of disruptive detractors and with a strong sense of place. Areas containing a strong, balanced structure with distinct features worthy of	World Heritage Site, National Park, AONB, Heritage Coast

	conservation. All landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. No or limited potential for substitution.	
Medium-High	Primarily containing valued landscape components combined in an aesthetically pleasing composition and lacking prominent disruptive visual detractors. Areas containing a strong structure with noteworthy features or elements, exhibiting a sense of place. Most landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Limited potential for substitution.	National Park, AONB, Heritage Coast, AGLV
Medium	Consisting primarily of valued landscape components combined in an aesthetically pleasing composition with low levels of disruptive visual detractors, exhibiting a recognisable landscape structure. Some landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Limited potential for substitution.	Undesignated, but value perhaps expressed through non-official publications or demonstrable use
Low-Medium	Containing some features of landscape value but lacking a coherent and aesthetically pleasing composition with frequent detracting visual elements, exhibiting a distinguishable structure often concealed by mixed land uses or development. Few landscape elements remain intact and in good repair.	Areas identified as having some redeeming features and possibly identified for improvement

Low	Lacking valued landscape components or comprising degraded, disturbed or derelict features, lacking any aesthetically pleasing composition with dominance of visually detracting elements, exhibiting mixed land uses which conceal the baseline structure. No landscape elements remain intact and in good repair.	Areas identified for recovery
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Landscape Impact Assessment:

Magnitude of change

Magnitude of change to the landscape character is measured on a scale of **High, Medium or Low** by considering the **scale** of effect to the baseline situation with the **duration** it is likely to occur and the **extent** of the receptor that will experience the change.

The following degrees of **scale** of effect have been adapted from GLVIA methodology:

- **Large:** total loss or major alteration to key elements of the pre development landscape, or the introduction of elements considered to be uncharacteristic when assessed within the attributes of the receiving landscape, or the proposal becomes a dominant feature within the scene with the surrounding elements becoming subordinate and the resultant effect is a change in the overall character.
- **Medium:** partial loss of, or alteration to one or more key elements of the landscape pre-development, or the introduction of elements that maybe prominent, or from a visibly recognisable new feature, but may not necessarily be considered substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.

- **Small:** minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements of the pre-development landscape, or the introduction of elements which constitute a minor component of the wider landscape, and are not uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.
- **Negligible:** where the development would cause a virtually imperceptible change in the existing use or character.

Duration is the time period over which the change to the receptor would arise as a result of the development. It is judged as:

- **Permanent:** The change is expected to be permanent with no intention for it to be reversed.
- **Long-term:** the change is expected to be in place for 10-25 years and will be reversed, fully mitigated or removed so no longer occurring beyond that time frame.
- **Medium-term:** the change is expected to be in place for 2-10 years and will be reversed, fully mitigated or removed so no longer occurring beyond that time frame.
- **Short-term:** the change is expected to be in place for 0-2 years and will be reversed, fully mitigated or removed so no longer occurring beyond that time frame.

Extent indicates the geographic area over which the effects will be felt as a result of the proposed development. It is judged as Wide, Intermediate, Localised or Limited.

- **Wide:** beyond 4km (or more than 50% of the receptor)
- **Intermediate:** up to approx. 2-4km (or around 50% of the receptor)

- **Localised:** site and surroundings up to 2km (or up to approx. 25% of the receptor)
- **Limited:** site, or part of the site (or up to approx. 10% of the receptor)

Significance of Landscape Impacts

The landscape impacts of the proposed development have been assessed by considering the degree to which each landscape feature is likely to be affected, taking into account the ease with which features could be replaced, and the contribution each feature makes to local landscape character, is assessed as large, medium or small. The condition of each feature is assessed as good, moderate or poor. These aspects are difficult to quantify and their assessment depends largely on professional judgement. Measures to mitigate the landscape impacts are also considered.

The overall significance of the landscape impacts are established by comparing the sensitivity of the landscape receptor against the magnitude of change with after consideration of the elements described in the paragraphs above. This is expressed as **Slight**, **Moderate** or **Major** and is summarised using the criteria stated in methodology Table C below. A judgement is made as to whether the type of effect resulting from the proposed development is considered to be **Beneficial** or **Adverse** based on the nature of the change in question.

Table D: Significance criteria of landscape impacts

SIGNIFICANCE	CRITERIA
Major Beneficial	Landscape feature is significantly enhance and improved in a manner consistent with the local landscape character
Moderate Beneficial	Landscape feature is enhanced and extended in a manner consistent with the local landscape character
Slight Beneficial	Landscape feature is enhanced in a manner consistent with local landscape character
Neutral	Virtually imperceptible or no indirect change in landscape characteristics over a very localised area, or virtually imperceptible, or no, direct change to landscape components/ character

Slight Adverse	Perceptible indirect change in landscape characteristics over a localised area, or direct change to landscape components/ character over a very localised area. Partial loss or deterioration of landscape component which is not mitigated
Moderate Adverse	Noticeable indirect change in landscape characteristics over less extensive area, or direct change to landscape feature/ character over a localised area.
Major Adverse	Very noticeable indirect change in landscape characteristics over an extensive area, or direct change to landscape features/ character over a less extensive area.

Visual Assessment

Views have been assessed from an average height of approximately 1.6m above ground level. The significance of a predicted impact is determined by combining the sensitivity of visual receptors with the magnitude of change, duration of the proposed development and the extent of the receptor that is likely to experience the change. The visual assessment focuses on the visual impacts upon public viewpoints so does not consider the effects upon views from private properties, which would be subject to separate Residential Amenity Assessment; this does not however affect the sensitivity of the receptors experiencing views.

The viewpoints were chosen to represent views in which the proposed development would be visible, none are included in which the proposed development would not be visible.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

Sensitivity is categorised as high, medium, or low, according to the degree to which a particular viewpoint or receptor can accommodate change arising from a particular development without detrimental effects on its visual amenity. This is judged by considering the susceptibility of the visual receptor to the type of change or development proposed with the value attached to that receptor with particular regard to the type and number of users of the receptor, this is summarised in Table D below. Sensitivity also considered the following factors:

- Location and context of the receptor: For example, receptors/viewpoints which are closer to the site are generally more susceptible;
- Number of viewers who commonly use the receptor: Some receptors/viewpoints are commonly used by the public, such as formal viewing platforms, picnic areas or recreational rights of way. Other viewpoints may be difficult to gain access to;
- Nature of the receptor: Public footpaths, for example, can be susceptible, since the users' attention is often focused on the landscape. By contrast, views from outdoor sport facilities, transport routes or places of work are less susceptible;
- Movement of viewers at /on the receptor: More transitory views, for example from a motorway, are generally less sensitive than views experienced from footpaths;
- Value attached to views take account of the relation to heritage assets or planning designations and the cultural significance of the viewpoint, including its appearance in guidebooks and tourist maps, or cultural and historical associations.

ABBREVIATIONS AND GLOSSARY OF TERMS

TERM	DEFINITION
AGHV	Areas of Great Historic Value
AGLV	Area of Great Landscape Value
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum (sea level)
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Characteristic	A distinctive element of the landscape that contributes to landscape character for instance a particular hedgerow pattern or sense of tranquillity.
Cumulative effects	The situation of effects that result from changes caused by a development in conjunction with other past, present or reasonably foreseeable actions. As defined by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2002)
Duration of effect	The time period over which the change to the receptor would arise as a result of the development. It is judged as Permanent, Long-term, Medium-term and Short-term.
Extent of effect	Indicates the geographic area over which the effects will be felt as a result of the proposed development. It is judged as Wide, Intermediate, Localised or Limited.
Landscape Character	The distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that occur in a particular landscape and how these are perceived. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement.
Landscape Character Areas	Single unique areas that are the discrete geological area of a particular landscape type.
Landscape Value	<i>'The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society'</i> . It is judged as National/International, Local, Community or Limited
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
Magnitude of effect	Judged as detailed in the methodology but tends to consider the scale, duration and extent of the effect.
SM	Schedule Monuments
Scale of effect	The degree of change which would arise as a result of the proposed development. It is judged as Large, Medium, Small or Negligible
Sensitivity	The relative extent to which the character and quality of the receptor can accommodate change as a result of a particular type of development. The sensitivity of a receptor is a combination of its susceptibility and value. Judgements of sensibility are detailed in the methodology.
Significance of effect	Judgements are detailed in the methodology but tend to be the sensitivity of receptor considered against the magnitude of change

SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
Susceptibility	Indicates the ability of a receptor (landscape or visual) to accommodate the proposed development ' <i>without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies or strategies</i> '. The susceptibility of a receptor is influenced by key characteristics, special qualities, purpose for designation and/or activity likely to be taking place. It is judged as High, Medium or Low.
ZVI	Zone of Visual Influence, the extent of where elements of the proposal are predicted to be visible based on topography and landscape features.
ZVT	Zone of Theoretical Visibility, this represents the area over which a development can theoretically be seen, based on digital terrain data. Limitations occur with intervening objects within the landscape not captured by the digital terrain data.

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