

Appendix C:

Assessment Methodology

Introduction

1. This Appendix sets out the methodology adopted within this Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVA) to assess the landscape and visual effects of the proposed intervention. The methodology is informed by guidance contained within the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Assessment, 3rd Edition, 2013), often referred to as 'GLVIA 3'.
2. Landscape and visual matters are separate, although closely related and interlinked issues, and are dealt with as such throughout the LVA. The methodologies for assessing both are outlined separately below.

Baseline Study

3. The initial step of the LVA is to review the existing landscape and visual resource in the vicinity of the proposed intervention, known as the 'baseline' landscape and visual conditions. This is a process of gathering information, as part of a desk study and subsequent field survey work, to understand features and characteristics of the landscape, the way the landscape is experienced, the quality and the value or importance of the landscape, and visual resources in the vicinity of the proposed intervention. The data collected forms the basis from which the landscape and visual effects of the intervention are identified and assessed.
4. The Landscape baseline study records the existing elements that make up the landscape in the study area, including:
 - Physical influences: Landform, waterbodies, vegetation types and patterns;
 - The influence of human activity: Land use, management, settlement and buildings, patterns and types of field enclosure;
 - The aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape: Scale, complexity, openness, tranquillity or wilderness;
 - The condition of the landscape, i.e. the state of an individual area of landscape; and
 - Reference to policy or designations as an indicator of recognised value, including specific features or characteristics that justify the designation of the area.

This informs a concise description of the existing character of the intervention site and its surrounding landscape and enables the classification of the landscape into distinct character areas or types, which share common features and characteristics.

5. The visual baseline study records and establishes the following:
 - The area in which the intervention may be visible. This is identified by a process of map interpretation and / or digital mapping to construct a map showing the area from which the proposed intervention may theoretically be visible, or its Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

- The different types of people (receptors) who may experience views of the proposed intervention and the viewpoints where they will be affected
- The nature of the views at the viewpoint

Assessment of Landscape Effects

General

6. The landscape assessment considers the potential effects of the proposed intervention on the components of the landscape as an environmental resource (as identified within the Baseline Study). Physical change to the landscape may result in changes to the distinctive character of that landscape and other surrounding landscapes and how they are perceived.
7. Landscape receptors which could be affected by a proposed intervention may include:
 - Individual constituent elements and features of the landscape;
 - Specific aesthetic and perceptual qualities of the landscape;
 - The overall character and key characteristics of the landscape as experienced in different areas (e.g. landscape character areas or types).
8. The level of the Landscape Effects identified is determined by a consideration of the **Sensitivity** of the landscape receptors and the **Magnitude of Change** to the landscape;
 - The Sensitivity of a landscape receptor combines judgements of their **Susceptibility** to the type of intervention proposed and the **Value** attached to the landscape receptor.

Sensitivity = Susceptibility + Value
 - The **Magnitude of Change** to the landscape receptor depends upon the size or scale of the intervention, the geographical extent of the area experiencing change and its duration and reversibility.

Magnitude of Change = Size/scale of intervention + geographical extent of change + duration / reversibility of change

(Refer to Figure A: Landscape Assessment Process and Table 6: Landscape Effects)

Landscape Susceptibility

9. Susceptibility is defined as the ability of the landscape receptor (whether it be the overall character or quality of a particular landscape type or area, or an individual element and/or feature, or particular aesthetic and perceptual aspects) to accommodate the proposed intervention without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies. The susceptibility of a landscape to change is dependent on the characteristics of the receiving landscape and the type and nature of the intervention proposed. (see paragraph 5.40 of GLVIA 3).

(Refer to Table 1: Landscape Susceptibility)

Landscape Value

10. This is defined as the relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society. Landscapes can be valued by different people for different reasons, connected to a range of factors including landscape quality, scenic quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interests, recreation value, perceptual aspects and associations. This consensus can be recognised at a local, regional or national or international scale. (see paragraph 5.44 and 5.45 of GLVIA 3).

(Refer to Table 2: Landscape Value)

Landscape Quality

11. Quality is defined as a measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements. (see Glossary of GLVIA 3).
12. A judgement of the Landscape Quality is considered an important consideration in determining Landscape Value.

(Refer to Table 3: Landscape Quality)

Landscape Sensitivity

13. The sensitivity of a landscape receptor combines judgements of their Susceptibility to the type of intervention proposed and the Value attached to the landscape. (see paragraph 5.39 of GLVIA 3).

(Refer to Table 4: Landscape Sensitivity)

Magnitude of Change (Landscape)

14. Is defined as the degree of change to the landscape receptor in terms of the following:
- Size and scale of intervention that is proposed. This relates to both physical scale of the intervention and the degree of aesthetic / perceptual qualities that are altered.
 - Geographical extent over which the landscape effects will be experienced. This is distinct from size or scale, as for example there may be large scale addition to a very localised area or small-scale addition to a large geographical area. In summary, the geographical extent may be a site level or the immediate setting of the site, or to a larger extent that effects the wider landscape character area or several landscape character areas.
 - Duration and reversibility of the intervention. Duration is judged as either short term, medium term or long term. Duration and reversibility are considered together and relates to permanence, e.g. housing development is permanent, whereas mineral working may be partially reversible in that the landscape could be reinstated to nearly its original form over time.

(Refer to Table 5: Magnitude of Change [Landscape])

Figure A: Landscape Assessment Process

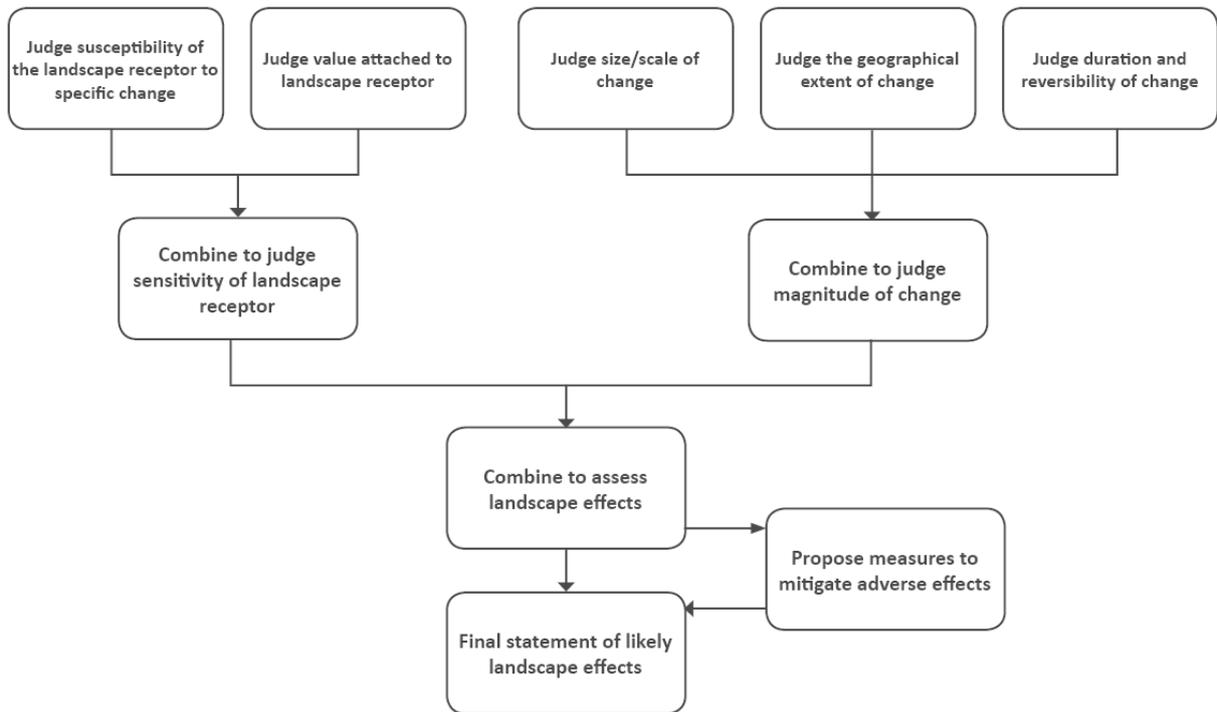


Table 1: Landscape Susceptibility

| Level | Description |
|---------------|---|
| High | Little or no ability to accommodate the proposed intervention without adverse consequences for the retention of the existing landscape baseline, or the delivery of landscape planning policies or strategies |
| Medium | Some ability to accommodate the proposed intervention without adverse consequences for the retention of the existing landscape baseline, or the delivery of landscape planning policies and strategies |
| Low | An ability to accommodate the proposed intervention without adverse consequences for the retention of the existing landscape baseline, or the delivery of landscape planning policies and strategies. |

Table 2: Landscape Value

| Level | Description | Level | Typical Examples |
|--------------------|---|---|--|
| Exceptional | Exceptional importance and / or rarity. High / Very High Quality No or very limited potential for substitution | International, National | World Heritage Site, National Park, AONB |
| High | High importance and / or rarity. Good / High Quality Limited potential for substitution. | National, Regional, Local | AGLV, LCI, ALLI, Conservation Area |
| Moderate | Medium importance and / or rarity. Medium / Good Quality Limited / some potential for substitution | Regional, Local | Undesignated but value perhaps expressed through non-official publications or demonstrable use. |
| Low | Low importance. Poor / Medium Quality with degradation Frequent and common with scope for substitution | Local | Areas identified as having some redeeming feature or features and possibly identified for improvement. |
| Very Low | No notable importance. Poor / Very Poor Quality and widely degraded / damaged Frequent and common with scope for substitution | Local | Areas identified for recovery. |

(Also see Table 3 for Quality criteria)

Table 3: Landscape Quality

| Level | Description |
|------------------|--|
| Very High | <p>Very strong and distinctive landscape structure, with characteristic land patterns and a balanced combination of landform and land cover, creating an overall strong sense of place</p> <p>Appropriate management for land use and land cover</p> <p>Distinct and widespread features worthy of conservation</p> <p>Very good conditions with no detracting features.</p> |
| High | <p>Strong landscape structure, with characteristic land patterns and a balanced combination of landform and land cover creating a notable sense of place.</p> <p>Appropriate management for land use and land cover, but potentially scope to improve</p> <p>Distinct features worthy of conservation</p> <p>Good condition with very occasional / limited detracting features</p> |
| Good | <p>Distinguishable landscape structure, with some characteristic land patterns and a combination of landform and land cover which is relatively balanced.</p> <p>Some scope to improve management of land use and land cover</p> <p>Some features worthy of conservation</p> <p>Good condition with some detracting features</p> |
| Medium | <p>Relatively distinguishable landscape structure, with some characteristic patterns of landform and land cover, which is imbalanced or considered uncharacteristic in places</p> <p>Scope to improve management of land use and land cover</p> <p>Some features worthy of conservation</p> <p>Moderate condition with some detracting features</p> |
| Poor | <p>Weak landscape structures, with limited and mixed characteristic patterns of landform and land cover</p> <p>Lack of management and intervention has resulted in degradation.</p> <p>Limited features worthy of conservation</p> <p>Poor condition with frequent detracting features</p> |
| Very poor | <p>Degraded and damaged landscape structure where mixed land use dominates</p> <p>Lack of management and intervention has resulted in significant degradation</p> <p>Very limited / no features worthy of conservation</p> <p>Degraded and damaged condition with widespread and frequent detracting features</p> |

Table 4: Landscape Sensitivity

| | | Landscape Susceptibility | | |
|-----------------|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | | Low | Medium | High |
| Landscape Value | Exceptional | High Medium | High | High |
| | High | Medium | High Medium | High |
| | Moderate | Medium Low | Medium | High Medium |
| | Low | Low | Medium Low | Medium |
| | Very Low | Low | Low | Medium Low |

Note: In this LVA Landscape Sensitivity is primarily expressed on a three-point scale of High, Medium or Low. Where appropriate and in certain circumstances, intermediate levels such as High Medium is used. In this instance the higher of the two levels is adopted to provide a robust judgment of Landscape Effects. For example, where the Landscape Sensitivity is High Medium, 'High' will be taken forward to assess Landscape Effects (see Table 6).

In exceptional circumstances a reasoned narrative is set out in the LVA in order to justify instances where intermediate levels are considered appropriate for taking forward to assess Landscape Effects so that it is clear how each judgement has been made.

Table 5: Magnitude of change (Landscape)

| Level | Description |
|--------------------------|---|
| <p>High</p> | <p><i>Total loss or substantial alteration to key elements / features / characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements considered to be totally uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.</i></p> <p>The intervention is of a large physical scale and would impose a totally different aesthetic and perceptual quality to the site in comparison to the baseline conditions.</p> <p>The change brought about by the proposed intervention would influence several landscape character types / areas</p> |
| <p>Medium</p> | <p><i>Partial loss or alteration to one or more key elements/ features/ characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not necessarily be considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.</i></p> <p>The intervention is of a moderate or large physical scale and would introduce a number of different aesthetic and perceptual qualities to the site in comparison to the baseline conditions.</p> <p>The change brought about by the proposed intervention would only influence the landscape character type/area within which the proposal lies.</p> |
| <p>Low</p> | <p><i>Minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements/ features/ characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that may not be uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.</i></p> <p>The intervention is of a small or moderate scale and would only introduce a minor difference in aesthetic and perceptual quality to the site in comparison to the baseline conditions.</p> <p>The change brought about by the proposed intervention would be localised and at the level of the immediate landscape setting of the site.</p> |
| <p>Negligible</p> | <p><i>Very minor loss or alteration to one or more to key elements/ features/ characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.</i></p> <p>The intervention is of a small scale and would not introduce any discernible difference in aesthetic and perceptual quality to the site in comparison to the baseline conditions</p> <p>The change brought about by the proposed intervention would be at site level and within the intervention site itself.</p> |

Table 6: Landscape Effects

| | | Landscape Sensitivity | | |
|---------------------|------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| | | Low | Medium | High |
| Magnitude of Change | High | Moderate | Moderate - Major | Major effect |
| | Medium | Minor - Moderate | Moderate | Moderate - Major |
| | Low | Minor | Minor - Moderate | Moderate |
| | Negligible | Negligible | Negligible | Negligible |

15. In accordance with the methodology suggested by the GLVIA 3, the nature of effect in this assessment are classified as follows:

Major Adverse Effect: Where the proposed intervention would result in a complete variance from the scale, pattern and landform of the landscape, and cause a very high quality landscape to be permanently changed and its quality diminished.

Moderate Adverse Effect: Where the proposed intervention would be out of scale with the landscape, or conflict with the local pattern and character, and cause an adverse effect on a landscape of recognised quality.

Minor Adverse Effect: Where the proposed intervention would not quite fit into the local scale and pattern of the landscape, and affect an area of recognised character.

None/Negligible: Where the proposed intervention would complement the scale, pattern and character of the existing landscape, and no discernible character change was apparent.

Minor Beneficial Effect: Where the proposed intervention would fit in well with the scale, character and pattern of the area, and has the potential to improve the existing landscape quality.

Moderate Beneficial Effect: Where the proposed intervention would fit in well with the landscape character of the area, and improve the quality of the landscape.

Major Beneficial Effect: Where the proposed intervention would fit in very well with the landscape character of the area, and greatly improve the quality of the landscape.

Assessment of Visual Effects

General

16. The landscape assessment considers the potential effects of the proposed intervention on views from within the landscape or a settlement and if necessary, from individual or isolated components, such as small grouping of, or singular properties.
17. When assessing the visual effect of the proposed intervention, the area from which the proposed intervention is theoretically visible is established on plan through desktop surveys (or using digital software if available). Once this Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) is established, then the true visibility of the intervention site is checked on site in order to understand the screening effect of existing vegetation, buildings and other features and the effect of distance on a receptor's perception of the site. A number of key views are then selected within these areas which are most representative of the available views of the site.
18. Viewpoints are selected in order to demonstrate representative scenarios. It is not required that the assessment describe every effect of the proposed intervention, but only the main or likely level visual effects which are required to inform the decision-making authority. If necessary the viewpoints are agreed in advance with the local authority.
19. The level of the Visual Effects identified is determined by a consideration of the **Sensitivity** of the visual receptors and the **Magnitude of Change** to the view;
 - The Sensitivity of a visual receptor combines judgements of their **Susceptibility** to the type of intervention proposed and the **Value** attached to the particular view.

Sensitivity = Susceptibility + Value
 - The **Magnitude of Change** to the view depends upon the size or scale of the intervention, the geographical extent of the area experiencing change and its duration and reversibility.

Magnitude of Change = Size/scale of intervention + geographical extent of change + duration / reversibility of change

(Refer to Figure B: Visual Assessment Process and Table 11: Visual Effects)

Visual Susceptibility

20. As defined within GLVIA 3, the susceptibility of different visual receptors to change in views and visual amenity is mainly a function of:
 - The occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations; and
 - The extent to which their attention or interest may there be focused on the view and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations

(Refer to Table 7: Visual Susceptibility)

Value attached to Views

21. Judgements made about the value attached to views consider

- Recognition of the importance of the particular view, for example in relation to heritage or cultural assets, or through planning designations;
- Recognition of the quality of the landscape that is in view and the extent of visibility, for example wide panoramic views or restricted, narrow views;
- Indicators of the value attached to views by visitors, for example through appearance in guidebooks, provision of facilities for enjoyment of the view (including seating, parking, interpretive material) and references to them in literature or art.

(Refer to Table 8: Value attached to View)

Visual Sensitivity

22. The sensitivity of a visual receptor combines judgements of their susceptibility to the type of intervention proposed and the value attached to the view. (see paragraph 6.31 of GLVIA 3).

(Refer to Table 9: Visual Sensitivity)

Magnitude of Change (Visual)

23. As defined within GLVIA 3, the Magnitude of Change is the degree of change to the view in terms of;

Size or scale

- Size and scale of the proposed intervention in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed intervention;
- The degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture;
- The nature of the view of the proposed intervention, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpsed.

Geographical extent

- The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;
- The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed intervention;
- The extent of the area over which the change would be visible.

Duration and reversibility of the visual effect

Duration is judged as either short term, medium term or long term. Duration and reversibility are considered together and relates to permanence, e.g. housing development is permanent, whereas mineral working may be partially reversible in that the landscape could be reinstated to nearly its original form over time. (Refer to Table 10: Magnitude of Change [visual])

Figure B: Visual Assessment Process

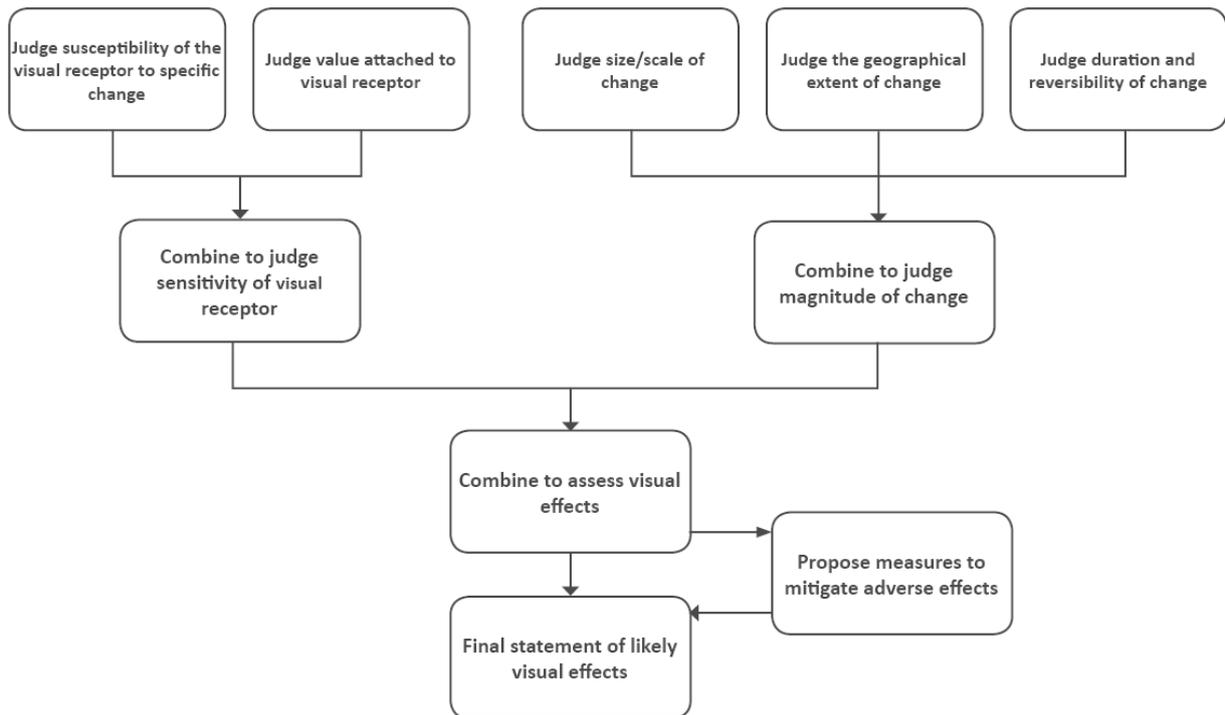


Table 7: Visual Susceptibility

| Level | Description |
|---------------|--|
| High | <p>Residents at home</p> <p>People, whether residents or visitors, who are engaged in outdoor recreation, including using public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focus on the landscape and particular view(s) e.g. users of a National Park or AONB.</p> <p>Visitors to heritage assets, or to other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience.</p> <p>Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area.</p> |
| Medium | <p>Users of public rights of way or people engaged in outdoor recreation where the enjoyment of the landscape is incidental rather than the main interest.</p> <p>Travellers on road or rail, where the views are transient and sporadic, but have a special significance in either the journey or the expression of the place being visited.</p> |
| Low | <p>People at their place or work, whose attention may be focused on their work or activity and not their surroundings, or where the setting is not important to the quality of working life.</p> <p>Travellers on road or rail, where the speed of travel and nature of the views involved are short lived and have no special significance.</p> |

Table 8: Value attached to Views

| Level | Description |
|-----------------|--|
| High | <p>Iconic, recognised or protected views through Supplementary Planning Guidance or development framework. View mentioned in the listing for a conservation area or literature / art.</p> <p>Wide panoramic distant views of a valued landscape(s).</p> <p>Views that are acknowledged or recorded in guide books or other publications and/or with references in culture such as literature or art.</p> |
| Moderate | <p>Views with distinctive features, or over a landscape of recognised character and quality, but relatively typical of the locality.</p> <p>Generally uninterrupted view / some minor obstruction</p> <p>Generally attractive with some detracting features</p> |
| Low | <p>Views of a degraded / damaged landscape or features with a low value and quality</p> <p>Restricted views with interruptions to the extent of view</p> |

Table 9: Visual Sensitivity

| | | Visual Susceptibility | | |
|------------------------|----------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | | Low | Medium | High |
| Value attached to view | High | Medium | High Medium | High |
| | Moderate | Medium Low | Medium | High Medium |
| | Low | Low | Medium Low | Medium |

Note: In this LVA Visual Sensitivity is primarily expressed on a three-point scale of High, Medium or Low. Where appropriate and in certain circumstances, intermediate levels such as High Medium is used. In this instance the higher of the two levels is adopted to provide a robust judgment of Visual Effects. For example, where the Landscape Sensitivity is High Medium, 'High' will be taken forward to assess Visual Effects (see Table 11).

In exceptional circumstances a reasoned narrative is set out in the LVA in order to justify instances where intermediate levels are considered appropriate for taking forward to assess Visual Effects so that it is clear how each judgement has been made

Table 10: Magnitude of change (Visual)

| Level | Description |
|-------------------|--|
| High | <p><i>Total loss or substantial alteration to the baseline view or introduction of elements considered to be totally uncharacteristic to view.</i></p> <p>The proposed intervention would occupy a large and extensive proportion of the view and would be easily noticed by the observer.</p> <p>The angle of the view and distance from the proposed intervention would result in a prominent change to the existing view and would significantly change the character or quality of the view.</p> <p>The proposed intervention significantly breaks the skyline / horizon line and is likely to be visible across an extensive area.</p> |
| Medium | <p><i>Partial loss or alteration to the baseline view or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not necessarily be considered to be substantially uncharacteristic of the view</i></p> <p>The proposed intervention would occupy a partial proportion of the view and would likely be noticed by the observer.</p> <p>The angle of the view and distance from the proposed intervention would result in a perceivable change to the existing view that will change the character or quality of the view.</p> <p>A small proportion of the proposed intervention breaks the skyline / horizon line and is likely to be visible across a relatively localised area.</p> |
| Low | <p><i>Minor loss or alteration to the baseline view or introduction of elements that may not be uncharacteristic when set within the view.</i></p> <p>The proposed intervention would occupy a relatively small proportion of the view / may only be glimpsed in part and would unlikely to be clearly noticeable by the observer.</p> <p>The angle of the view and distance from the proposed intervention would result in a slightly perceptible change in the existing view but this would not affect the character or quality of the view.</p> <p>The proposed intervention does not break the skyline / horizon line and is likely to be visible within a confined to a very limited area.</p> |
| Negligible | <p><i>Very minor loss or alteration to the baseline view or introduction of elements that may not be uncharacteristic when set within the view.</i></p> <p>The proposed intervention would not be visible / would occupy a very slight proportion of the view and not likely be noticed by the observer.</p> <p>The angle of the view and distance from the proposed intervention would result in no perceptible change in the existing view and the character or quality of the view will remain unchanged.</p> <p>The proposed intervention does not break the skyline / horizon line and is likely to be visible within the site extents only</p> |

Table 11: Visual Effects

| | | Visual Sensitivity | | |
|---------------------|------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| | | Low | Medium | High |
| Magnitude of Change | High | Moderate | Moderate - Major | Major effect |
| | Medium | Minor - Moderate | Moderate | Moderate - Major |
| | Low | Minor | Minor - Moderate | Moderate |
| | Negligible | Negligible | Negligible | Negligible |

24. The nature of effect in this assessment is classified as follows:

Major Adverse Effect: Where the proposed intervention would cause a significant deterioration in the existing view.

Moderate Adverse Effect: Where the proposed intervention would cause a noticeable deterioration in the existing view.

Minor Adverse Effect: Where the proposed intervention would cause a slight deterioration in the existing view.

None / Negligible: No discernible deterioration or improvement in the existing view.

Minor Beneficial Effect: Where the proposed intervention would cause a slight improvement in the existing view.

Moderate Beneficial Effect: Where the proposed intervention would cause a noticeable improvement in the existing view.

Major Beneficial Effect: Where the proposed intervention would cause a significant improvement in the existing view.

Tower Works
Globe Road
Leeds
LS11 5QG
T 0113 2454695

E info@re-formlandscape.com
www.re-formlandscape.com

re-form
landscape architecture