



**Cherwell District Council**

**Land at Junction 10, M40**  
**Landscape and Visual**  
**Impact Assessment -**  
**Review**

**Final report**

Prepared by LUC

January 2022



**Cherwell District Council**

**Land at Junction 10, M40**

**Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment -  
Review**

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

**1.1** LUC has been commissioned by Cherwell District Council (CDC) to provide advice on landscape and visual matters relating to the submission of three planning applications - one submitted in detail and two submitted in outline – (21/03266/F; 21/03267/OUT; and 21/03268/OUT) for the development of storage and distribution buildings with associated access and internal roads (the ‘Development’) on land at Baynard’s Green near Junction 10 of the M40 (the ‘Application Site’). This has included a site visit (07 January 2022) and attendance at a meeting with CDC (26 January 2022).

**1.2** This report sets out a review of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) prepared by Tyler Grange Ltd on behalf of Albion Land (the ‘Applicant’), as part of an Environmental Statement (ES) to accompany the planning applications. The review comments specifically on the robustness of the LVIA in relation to current industry guidance - namely Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (GLVIA3).

**1.3** The review has been undertaken by Chartered Members of the Landscape Institute and is informed by the Landscape Institute’s Technical Guidance Note 1/20 ‘Reviewing Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments and Landscape and Visual Appraisals’<sup>1</sup>.

### Application Site context

**1.4** The Application Site is located at Baynard’s Green to the north of Junction 10 of the M40. It is made up of two parcels of agricultural land located to the east and west of the A43, referred to in the ES as the ‘Eastern Site’ and ‘Western Site’ respectively. The Eastern Site measures 23.1 hectares (ha) and is defined by the A43 to the west, the B4100 to the north and north-east, a hedgerow field boundary to the east, and woodland belts associated with the Cherwell Valley Services to the south. The Western Site measures 43.45 ha and is defined by the A43 to the east, the B4100 to the north, a farm track and associated hedgerow to the west, and the M40 to the south and south-west.

**1.5** The land within the Application Site is flat to gently undulating, sloping gradually from approximately 128m above ordnance datum (AOD) in the north-eastern corner of the

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<sup>1</sup> Landscape Institute (2020) Reviewing Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIAs) and Landscape and Visual Appraisals (LVAs).

Western Site to approximately 109m AOD in the south of the Eastern Site. It comprises open regular-shaped arable fields defined predominantly by low-clipped hedgerows with some loss/gaps in places.

**1.6** The Western Site is traversed by a Public Right of Way (PRoW), and a bridleway runs along its western boundary. The Eastern Site is not publicly accessible, although a bridleway runs along its southern boundary.

**1.7** The Application Site is largely devoid of built form, other than a small building in agricultural use within the Western Site. However, the Eastern Site is located immediately north of Cherwell Valley Services and the Western Site is located to the immediate south-west of the hamlet of Baynard's Green. Other settlements/residential properties in the surrounding area include the villages of Fritwell and Ardley with Fewcott to the west and south-west respectively (both separated from the Application Site by the M40); the village of Stoke Lyne to the east; a residential property at Lone Barn to the east; and a residential property at Horwell Farmhouse to the north-west.

**1.8** Other features in and around the site include Stoke Wood, which is almost entirely designated as Ancient Woodland, to the south of the Eastern Site; and several blocks of woodland, including Ancient Woodland, to the north-east within Tusmore Park.

**1.9** As identified within the Oxfordshire Wildlife & Landscape Study (OWLS) (2004), the Eastern Site is located entirely within the Landscape Character Type (LCT) 19: Wooded Estatelands and Landscape Character Area (LCA) C: Middleton Stoney (CW/59); and the Western Site lies partly within the above LCT and LCA to the south and partly within LCT 6: Farmland Plateau and LCA H: Fritwell (CW/57) to the north.

## Chapter 2

### Review of LVIA

#### Scope of the LVIA

**2.1** The LVIA is set out as Chapter 13 of the ES and is supported by the following:

- Appendix 13.1: Figures:
  - Figure 13.1: Site Location;
  - Figure 13.2: Site Context;
  - Figure 13.3: Landscape Policy Plan;
  - Figure 13.4: Landscape Character;
  - Figure 13.5: Topography;
  - Figure 13.6: Zone of Theoretical Visibility;
  - Figure 13.7: Photoviewpoint Location Plan; and
  - Figure 13.8: Landscape Strategy Plan;
- Appendix 13.2: Photoviewpoint Sheets and Methodology;
- Appendix 13.3: LVIA Methodology;
- Appendix 13.4: Extracts from landscape character assessment;
- Appendix 13.5: Scoped out Photoviewpoints; and
- Appendix 13.6: Correspondence with Cherwell District Council

**2.2** The LVIA sets out the relevant legislation, planning policy and guidance; the assessment methodology; a description of the baseline conditions for the Application Site and wider study area; an assessment of the effect of the Development on landscape and visual receptors during the enabling works (Western Site only) and construction, Year 1 operation and Year 15 of operation; a cumulative assessment at construction and operation; and a concluding/summary section. The general scope is broadly appropriate, except for a lack of night-time assessment. There are also some issues with the detailed scope (for example the range of receptors identified), which are highlighted in the more detailed sections below.

#### Baseline content

**2.3** A description of the Application Site (including both the Eastern Site and Western Site) and study area is set out in

Section 13.4 of the LVIA. This considers the landscape baseline and visual baseline separately which is appropriate.

**2.4** Paragraph 13.3.9 states that a 2km study area has been defined and that this was informed by an understanding of the landform and built form, and through the use of Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) mapping. Paragraph 13.3.15 goes on to say that the ZTV is a bare-earth model, showing the worst-case scenario for potential visibility of a building up to 25m high, and that this was used as a first sieve exercise to scope down the areas with potential views towards the Site. This is an acceptable approach, and provides an appropriately-sized study area. The viewpoints were subsequently checked in the field by LUC.

**2.5** Whilst the viewpoints were agreed with CDC at the Pre-Application stage (as set out in Table 13.1 of the LVIA), we feel that additional viewpoints should be added as follows:

- on the unnamed road between the B4100 and Tusmore Park in the vicinity of Lone Barn to the east;
- on PRoW (Footpath) 367/15/20 in the vicinity of Horwell Farmhouse to the north-west; and
- on PRoW (Bridleway) 109/9/10 on the edge of Ardley with Fewcott (we note that viewpoint E was scoped out of the assessment, although no justification for this is provided).

### Landscape baseline

**2.6** The LVIA provides an overview of the published landscape character assessments relevant to the study area at a National and Local level. It summarises the key characteristics for LCT6: Farmland Plateau and LCT 19: Wooded Estatelands and LCA H: Fritwell (CW/57) and LCA C: Middleton Stoney (CW/59) as identified within OWLS (2004). However, it does not refer to the key recommendations and guidelines for each LCT and LCA, which should inform any proposed landscape and visual related mitigation/design (see below).

**2.7** A site-specific character assessment describes how the Application Site fits within the wider context of the LCTs and LCAs (i.e. how representative it is of the published LCTs and LCAs). This is followed by an assessment of the Landscape Value, Susceptibility and Sensitivity for each LCT and LCA as well as for the Eastern Site and Western Site. Whilst the assessment ratings set out seem reasonable, this section would benefit from a more detailed and clear narrative text explaining/justifying the ratings in respect to the criteria set out in the methodology (in accordance with GLVIA3 and as summarised in paragraph 13.3.59 of the LVIA). It would also be helpful for the assessment of landscape value for the Application Site to cross-refer to other chapters/studies where

relevant, such as the arboriculture assessment (e.g. referencing grades of tree etc).

**2.8** The baseline should include reference to the baseline character at night, including levels of lighting and key light sources. This should inform an assessment of night-time effects.

### Visual Baseline

**2.9** Paragraph 13.3.14 states that the visual baseline establishes the areas from where the Development is likely to be seen, by whom, and the nature of views and visual amenity; and that this was informed through the use of aerial imagery, mapping and the ZTV. Paragraph 13.3.19 explains that from this exercise, a series of viewpoints were identified which were then agreed with CDC. This approach is appropriate.

**2.10** Fifteen Representative Photoviewpoints are used to inform the visual assessment. These are included in Appendix 13.2, with the locations shown on Figure 13.7 in Appendix 13.1. Whilst there is a good number and geographic spread of viewpoints, representing various visual receptor types, we feel additional viewpoints should be added (see paragraph 2.5 of this review) and that currently omitted visual receptors should be included (as described in the following three paragraphs).

**2.11** CDC requested (via email on August 12th, 2021) that residential receptors be included within the assessment (replicated at Appendix 13.6 of the LVIA). Whilst a visual amenity component of Residential Amenity (i.e. a Residential Visual Amenity Assessment) may not be required (to be determined by CDC, considering a range of factors), it is important to understand the visual impacts on local communities/people living in the area.

**2.12** Table 13.1 sets out that viewpoint 8 is used to represent the views available from the residential properties close to Baynard's House. However, this receptor doesn't appear to have been carried forward to the assessment. Furthermore, other residential receptors in proximity to the Application Site are not included in the LVIA (e.g. at Horwell Farmhouse to the north-west and at Lone Barn to the east). The only residential receptors assessed are those in Stoke Lyne to the east (Photoviewpoint 1). In addition, paragraph 13.4.52 states that effects on receptors within the settlements of Fritwell to the west and Ardley with Fewcott to the south-west are scoped out, although it isn't clear why. LUC's site visit and Photoviewpoints 12 and 13 suggest some level of visibility from these locations. The additional viewpoint requested on PRoW (Bridleway) 109/9/10 will represent views from the edge of Ardley with Fewcott.

**2.13** Other visual receptors not included in the assessment are: users of the M40; users of B4100 to the north of the

Application Site; and users of the A43, including from the junctions with the M40 and B4100. Views available to users of the A43 and B4100 in particular were highlighted within CDC's Scoping Response, although this point is not replicated within Table 13.1 of the LVIA. These receptors should be considered within the LVIA.

**2.14** Paragraph 13.4.47 states that the existing view and the value of each of the identified groups of visual receptors is summarised in Table 13.12. This provides a description of the nature, composition and characteristics of the existing views experienced at these viewpoints; and elements such as landform, buildings or vegetation, which may interrupt, filter or otherwise influence the views. This provides a reasonable amount of information and generally aligns with GLVIA3 (Paragraph 6.24). However, whilst the assessment ratings set out seem reasonable, this section would benefit from a more detailed and clear narrative text explaining/justifying the ratings (in respect to the criteria set out in the methodology) in accordance with GLVIA3.

**2.15** The subsequent visual assessment has been undertaken on a receptor basis (i.e. people), informed by the Photoviewpoints, which is appropriate and aligns with GLVIA3 (noting the lack of coverage of some receptors noted above).

**2.16** The viewpoint photography is presented in Appendix 13.2. This was captured in July 2021 when deciduous vegetation was largely in leaf. This is acknowledged in paragraph 13.3.62 (third bullet) although it is not clear whether the assessment has considered the summer conditions (as shown in the Photoviewpoints) or winter conditions. The only references to winter conditions within the assessment are for residents of Stoke Lyne (Photoviewpoint 1). The Applicant should therefore confirm that the visual assessment has considered the worst-case scenario of winter conditions for all receptors, and make this clear in the assessment.

## Assessment

### Methodology

**2.17** The Methodology is summarised in Chapter 13 with a more detailed version provided in Technical Appendix 13.3.

**2.18** Paragraph 13.3.29 of the LVIA acknowledges that *"the emphasis on EIA is on likely significant effects rather than on comprehensively cataloguing of every conceivable effect that might occur"*. It also acknowledges the relevance of GLVIA3 as guidance for undertaking LVIA's, and the components of the report generally align with the broad principles set out in GLVIA3. This includes baseline studies, description and details of the landscape proposals and mitigation, and the identification and description of the likely effects of the Development. It also provides separate consideration of

landscape and visual effects, and generally uses terminology consistent with GLVIA3.

**2.19** The methodology presents thresholds/criteria used to inform judgements. In accordance with GLVIA3, this includes for the sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors (including consideration of both value and susceptibility); magnitude of change to receptors (with reference to size/ scale of change, geographical extent, duration and reversibility); and overall level/significance of effect. The criteria for determining these aspects is set out in Tables 13.2 – 13.9, which is acceptable.

**2.20** Paragraph 13.3.58 states that effects identified at a major or major-moderate level are considered to be significant and those effects assessed at a moderate significance or less are *"of lesser concern"*; this is reiterated in Appendix 1. We would question whether some of the moderate effects identified could be considered significant, particularly those with sensitivity or magnitude of impact ratings tending towards high-medium (e.g. Users of the PRoW network to the west and south west of the Site, who are assessed as having a high sensitivity and experiencing a medium/low magnitude of impact during at operation Year 1. The matrix presented in Table 13.9 suggests that this would result in an effect of major-moderate or moderate).

**2.21** Paragraph 13.3.49 states that the magnitude of impact considers the size or scale of the Development, along with the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration. This is re-iterated in paragraph 13.3.53 of the LVIA and in Appendix 1, with the latter also mentioning the consideration of Reversibility. This approach is appropriate and aligns with GLVIA 3. However, in the assessment tables the duration and reversibility considerations are presented in a separate column so it is not clear how/if these have fed into the overall Magnitude of Impact ratings. The LVIA would benefit from a clear narrative text that justifies/explains the ratings (in accordance with paragraph 3.36 of GLVIA3).

**2.22** Paragraph 13.3.54 of the LVIA notes that landscape and visual effects are assessed through the application of professional judgement and is not reliant on the formulaic interpretation of the tabulated criteria. This is appropriate and accords with GVLIVA3, although where matrices are used they do need to be clearly explained and the assessment should align. The LVIA would benefit from a clear narrative text describing the landscape and visual effects and the judgements made (as per paragraph 3.36 of GLVIA3).

### Assessment of effects during the enabling works (Western Site only)

**2.23** The landscape and visual effects during the enabling works are set out in Tables 13.14 and 13.15. The assessment is supported by only limited narrative text setting out a 'description of change' and would benefit from a more detailed



justification of the judgements made which should align with the methodology.

**2.24** We feel that some of the effects during the enabling works have been under reported. For example, it is concluded that there would be no views of the works available to users of the PRow network to the east and north of the Site, however based on Photoviewpoint 10 and LUC's site visit, some filtered views are likely to be available, particularly where vegetation removal will occur along the B4100 (as shown on Parameter Plan 03).

**2.25** The visual impact on the local community/residential receptors at Baynard's Green is not assessed; these receptors would experience clear views of the enabling works occurring within the Western Site, including at close proximity (viewpoint 8). This should be included within the assessment as requested by CDC at the pre-application stage.

**2.26** No significant landscape and visual effects are identified within the assessment for the enabling works phase.

### Assessment of effects during Construction

**2.27** The landscape and visual effects during construction are set out in Tables 13.16 to 13.20. The assessment is supported by only limited narrative text setting out a 'description of change' and would benefit from a more detailed justification of the judgements made which should align with the methodology.

**2.28** We feel that some of the effects during the construction phase have been under reported and are not in line with the matrix presented in Table 13.9. For example, construction activities at the Western Site are assessed as causing a Medium/Low magnitude of impact on the Medium sensitivity LCT 6: Farmland Plateau, which is judged to result in a minor adverse effect (the criteria within Table 13.9 suggest this should be higher – moderate or moderate-minor); and construction activities at the Eastern Site are assessed as causing a Medium/Low magnitude of impact on the High sensitivity residents of Stoke Lyne, which is judged to result in a minor adverse effect (the criteria within Table 13.9 suggest this should be higher – major-moderate or moderate).

**2.29** We also note some discrepancies in assessment findings. For example it is not clear why a Medium/Low impact on LCT 6 results in a minor effect, whilst a Low magnitude of impact on LCA H: Fritwell also results in a Minor effect despite both receptors being assessed as having Medium sensitivity. This should be amended to align, or a clear narrative provided that explains the judgements.

**2.30** The local community/residential receptors at Baynard's Green are not assessed; these receptors would experience clear views of the construction works occurring within the Western Site, including at close proximity (Photoviewpoint 8).

This was requested by CDC in the Scoping Opinion and should be included within the assessment.

**2.31** As noted above, other visual receptors are also omitted from the assessment, including residential receptors at Horwell Farmhouse to the north-west and at Lone Barn to the east; the local community within the settlements of Fritwell to the west and Ardley with Fewcott to the south-west; users of M40; users of B4100; and users of the A43. These should be included within the assessment.

**2.32** The assessment does not currently set out lighting proposals associated with the development or assess the landscape and visual effects of lighting at night during the construction phase – this should be included within the assessment, with cross-reference to the Lighting Assessment.

**2.33** The LVIA does not identify any significant adverse landscape and visual effects during the construction phase.

**2.34** The applicant should consider the potential for significant effects on some of the other receptors, including (but not necessarily limited to) the following:

- Landscape features and character of both the Eastern Site and Western Site;
- Users of the PRow to the south of the Site (Photoviewpoint 6), due to construction works in the Eastern Site;
- Users of the PRow network to the east and north of the Site (Photo-viewpoints 2, 3, 5 and 10), due to construction works in the both the Eastern Site and Western Site; and
- Users of the PRow that traverses the Western Site (Photo-viewpoints 7, 8 and 9), due to construction works in the Eastern Site.

### Assessment of effects during operation

**2.35** The landscape and visual effects during operation are set out in Tables 13.21 to 13.26. As noted for the construction phase, the assessment is supported by only limited narrative text setting out a 'description of change' and would benefit from a more detailed text to justify/support the judgements made which should align with the methodology.

**2.36** We feel that some of the effects during the operational phase have been under reported and are not in line with the matrix presented in Table 13.9. For example, the Development at Year 1 in the Eastern Site is assessed as causing a Medium/Low magnitude of impact on the High sensitivity residents of Stoke Lyne, which is judged to result in a Minor Adverse effect (the criteria within Table 13.9 suggest this should be higher – Major-Moderate or Moderate); and Development at Year 1 in the Western Site is assessed as

causing a High/Medium magnitude of impact on the High sensitivity users of the PRoW to the west and southwest of the Site, which is judged to result in a Moderate adverse effect (the criteria within Table 13.9 suggest this should be higher – Major or Major-Moderate).

**2.37** We also note some discrepancies in assessment findings. For example, development within the Eastern Site is assessed as causing a Medium magnitude of impact on the High sensitivity users of the PRoW network to the east and north of the Site, resulting in a Moderate Adverse effect; whilst the same magnitude of impact and sensitivity ratings are assessed as resulting in only a Moderate-Minor Adverse effect on users of the PRoW that traverses the Western Site. This should be amended to align, or a clear narrative provided that explains the judgements. Also, it is not clear why the Development within the Western Site is judged to result in a Medium/Low magnitude of impact on LCT 6: Farm Plateau and only a Low magnitude of impact on the smaller LCA H: Fritwell.

**2.38** As with construction effects, the local community/residential receptors at Baynard's Green are not assessed; and several other visual receptors are also omitted from the assessment (as set out above). These should be included within the assessment.

**2.39** The assessment does not currently set out lighting proposals associated with the development or assess the landscape and visual effects of lighting at night during the operational phase – this should be included within the assessment, with cross-reference to the Lighting Assessment.

**2.40** Significant effects are identified in operation year 1 for:

- Landscape features and character of the Eastern Site and Western Site;
- Users of the PRoW to the south of the Site (Photoviewpoint 6), due to Development within the Eastern Site;
- Users of the PRoW that traverses the Western Site (Photoviewpoints 7, 8 and 9), due to Development within the Western Site;

**2.41** The applicant should consider the potential for significant effects on some of the other receptors, including (but not necessarily limited to) the following:

- Residents of Stoke Lyne (Photo-viewpoint 1), due to Development within the Eastern Site;
- Users of the PRoW network to the east and north of the Site (Photo-viewpoints 2, 3, 5 and 10), due to Development within the both the Eastern Site and Western Site; and

- Users of the PRoW to the west and southwest of the Site (Photoviewpoints 12 and 13), due to Development within the both the Eastern Site and Western Site.

**2.42** Significant effects are identified in operation year 15 for:

- Users of the PRoW to the south of the Site (Photoviewpoint 6), due to Development within the Eastern Site;

**2.43** The applicant should consider the potential for significant effects to remain at Year 15 for some of the other receptors, including (but not necessarily limited to) the following:

- Landscape features and character of the Eastern Site and Western Site; and
- Users of the PRoW that traverses the Western Site (Photoviewpoints 7, 8 and 9), due to Development within the Western Site at proximity;

### Secondary, Cumulative and Combined Impacts

**2.44** A separate figure within Chapter 3 (Figure 3.3) shows the location and relationship to the Application Site of the identified cumulative schemes. This should be included in, or referenced from, the LVIA Chapter.

**2.45** A cumulative assessment is provided for the same landscape and visual receptors assessed for the proposed development, which is appropriate (noting that it should be extended to receptors currently excluded from the LVIA).

**2.46** The assessment of cumulative landscape effects does not set out magnitude of impact or overall effect judgements – this should be confirmed. Notwithstanding the following comment, the conclusions for the developments assessed seem reasonable.

**2.47** We would question whether cumulative effects on the local community in Ardley with Fewcott would occur, with sequential views available from the village north towards the Development and south towards the Oxfordshire SRFI. The LVIA acknowledges that there would be some views towards both the Development and the completed SRFI available to users of the PRoW close to Photoviewpoints 9 and 13. The findings of the cumulative assessment in regards to this should be confirmed.

### Visualisations

**2.48** Verified views have been produced for all 15 Photoviewpoints. A methodology is included at Appendix 13.2 A which is helpful. Some points to note:

- Paragraph 13.3.25 states that the verified views are produced in accordance with Landscape Institute TGN 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals to Type 3, which is appropriate.

- The applicant should ensure that the format of the images is recorded in terms of image enlargement and level represented (with reference to the LI guidance).
- The method/ images should set out which aspects of the development have been modelled (and what is not shown in each) e.g. do they include the access road? Proposed swales? Proposed vegetation?
- There needs to be an acknowledgement that visibility of the Development will be greater in winter, preferably with details about how much additional visibility will be gained from which viewpoints (e.g. which parts of the Development may be visible without leaves on trees).
- All images show the screening effect of intervening vegetation, whilst Photoviewpoint 03 does not.

**2.49** Note for the Council: The images should be viewed as per instruction on Photoviewpoints i.e. printed at A3 landscape (or 100% on screen) and no smaller to ensure they provide a reasonable indication of the scale of the proposal. Visualisations should ideally be used in the field so that the real scale of the change can be observed and appreciated.

## Mitigation

**2.50** Paragraph 13.5.1 states that a number of primary and tertiary mitigation measures have been identified through the iterative EIA process and have been incorporated into the design and construction planning of the Development. Paragraph 13.5.2 and 13.5.3 then set out the measures related to landscape and visual considerations, which are shown on Figure 13.8. This is appropriate.

**2.51** However, the development of the design (both built and landscape) is not clearly set out. This should be explained in the LVIA Chapter with cross references to other ES Chapters and the Design and Access Statement where relevant. The reader needs to understand how the proposals have evolved, who has been involved in those discussions, and how they have been informed by the landscape and visual context of the site.

**2.52** We have the following observations on mitigation as it is currently set out:

- No mention is made of if, or how, the LVIA has influenced the proposed built development in terms of siting, orientation/arrangement, height and massing/bulk. The applicant should confirm this.
- No mention is made of if, or how, the LVIA has influenced assumptions on architectural detail and materials. The only mention in regard to this is to sensitive cladding principles (paragraph 13.5.3) and a light grey colour (paragraph 13.3.61). CDC may wish to

request a colour study is undertaken to inform finishes or more innovative cladding techniques.

- In regard to the proposed use of bunding and planting to reduce views from the wider landscape, it is not clear to what extent this would reduce views from the wider landscape. The upper levels of the Development are shown as being visible above existing well-established vegetation within a number of the verified views (e.g. Photoviewpoint 3, 4, 12 and 13) and visibility would be greater in winter. Additionally, the proposed areas of woodland on the periphery of the Site appear relatively narrow on Figure 13.8.
- Paragraph 13.3.61 states that the planting growth rate is assumed to be 1m in 3 years for trees, but that this will vary depending on species and soil conditions. However, as no information is provided on assumptions regarding the size and form of planting at Construction (i.e. whips, heavy standards etc) it is not clear how high planting is likely to be at Year 15.
- No reference is made to how the key recommendations and guidelines for relevant LCT and LCA (i.e. LCT6: Farmland Plateau, LCT 19: Wooded Estatelands, LCA H: Fritwell and LCA C: Middleton Stoney) have influenced the development design and mitigation.

## Non-Technical Summary

**2.53** Landscape and visual impacts is set out in chapter 13 of the ES Non-Technical Summary (NTS).

**2.54** Paragraph 13.7 of the NTS states that the Enabling Works would lead to negligible effects on landscape and visual receptors. This does not agree with the findings set out in the main LVIA chapter, which identifies larger effects, including a moderate/minor adverse effect on the landscape features and character of the Enabling Works Site. The applicant should amend the NTS to align with the LVIA.

**2.55** The NTS states that Construction works associated with the Eastern and Western Development would have Minor Adverse impacts on surrounding landscape receptors, with Moderate Adverse effects on the landscape features of the Sites themselves. This agrees with the findings set out in the main LVIA chapter, although indicates that the Moderate effect is significant which disagrees with paragraph 13.6.13 of the LVIA (this states that no significant effects were identified during the construction phase).

**2.56** The NTS also states that Moderate Adverse visual effects were identified for receptors using the PRoW to the south of the Site and to the west and the south west, with effects at other locations ranging from negligible to Minor adverse. This largely agrees with the findings set out in the main LVIA chapter, although should also state that receptors

using the PRow to the east and north of the Site would also experience a Moderate Adverse visual effect.

**2.57** Paragraph 13.10 of the NTS states that the completed Development would have Major Adverse impacts on surrounding landscape receptors, which would reduce to Minor Adverse once new planting is fully mature in 15 years' time. This does not agree with the LVIA, which identifies a Major/Moderate Adverse effect at worst on the landscape features and character of both the Western and Eastern Sites, reducing to Moderate adverse effects at Year 15.

**2.58** The NTS states that for visual receptors, significant residual effects are identified from the completed Development on the users of the PRow south of the Site, and that at other locations there would be there would be Negligible to Moderate adverse visual effects at Year 15, with the most significant effects experienced by receptors closest to the Site (i.e. users of the PRow that traverses the Western Site and locations on the PRow to the north, east, west and south west of the Site). This agrees with the findings set out in the main LVIA chapter.

**2.59** Notwithstanding the above comments, the NTS provides sufficient information for the non-specialist reader to understand the main environmental impacts of the proposal without reference to the main ES. However, any changes made to the assessment as a result of the comments in this review, the NTS should also be updated accordingly.

## **Presentation of the assessment findings**

**2.60** The LVA is presented in logical chapters utilising a mix of text, plans and photographs to communicate the assessment findings.

## Chapter 3

### Summary and recommendations

[Click to enter introduction.](#)

**3.1** The LVIA prepared to support the planning applications (21/03266/F; 21/03267/OUT; and 21/03268/OUT) follows the general principles set out within GLVIA3. However, to be able to make a fully informed planning decision, the request for further information and/or clarification is recommended as follows:

- The LVIA should refer to the key recommendations and guidelines for each LCT and LCA set out within OWLS (2004), and set out how these have been considered in the design development.
- The LVIA should provide more detailed and clear narrative text to support the judgements/assessment findings (in accordance with paragraph 3.36 of GLVIA3), which should align with the methodology.
- The LVIA should cross-refer to other chapters/studies where relevant, such as the arboriculture assessment and Lighting Assessment (e.g. referencing grades of tree etc).
- The baseline section should include reference to the baseline character at night, including levels of lighting and key light sources. This will inform an assessment of night-time landscape and visual effects of lighting during the construction and operational phases, which should cross-refer to the Lighting Assessment.
- The LVIA should include additional viewpoints (as set out in paragraph 2.5 above).
- The LVIA should include an assessment for the omitted visual receptors (as set out in paragraph 2.11 to 2.13. above).
- The Applicant should confirm that the assessment has considered the worst-case scenario of winter conditions for all receptors, and make this clear in the assessment.
- The applicant should review the judgements made on effects during the enabling works, construction and operation, to ensure none have been under reported.
- In regard to discrepancies in assessment findings, the applicant should amend these, or provide an explanation for the judgements as part of detailed clear narrative text.

- The applicant should consider the potential for significant effects on some of the other receptors (see paragraphs 2.34 and 2.43).
- The cumulative assessment should include, or cross-refer to, Figure 3.3 of the ES.
- The assessment of cumulative landscape should set out magnitude of impact and overall effect judgements.
- The applicant should confirm whether any cumulative visual effects would be experienced by the local community in Ardley with Fewcott (i.e. sequential views available from the village north towards the Development and south towards the Oxfordshire SRFI).
- The applicant should ensure that the format of the Photoviewpoint images is recorded in terms of image enlargement and level represented (with reference to the LI TGN 06/19).
- The methodology and/or images should set out which aspects of the development have been modelled (and what is not shown in each).
- The design development (both built and landscape) should be explained in the LVIA, with cross references to other ES Chapters and the Design and Access Statement where relevant. This should include how landscape and visual considerations have influenced the siting, orientation/arrangement, height, massing/bulk, architectural detail and materials of the proposed built development.
- The applicant should confirm what assumptions were made in regards to the form and size of planting at construction (e.g. whips, heavy standards etc).
- The applicant should amend the NTS to align with the LVIA, and ensure that this reflects any changes made to the assessment as a result of the comments in this review.