

development.

### **Summary of visual effects**

- 7.20 Overall, the greatest degree of visual impact will be from those using the PRoW network through the site itself and elevated receptors relative to the generally low-lying landscape in the study area. These include short-distance views from the Oxfordshire Way as it extends west from the settlement of Noke, the visual effects of which lessen as it continues north-west due to the falling elevation. It also includes long-distance views from the Oxfordshire Way and local road network near to Beckley to the south-east, which are within the context of existing development in the low-lying landscape.
- 7.21 The majority of other views towards the site in the local area are generally screened fully or in part by intervening existing and proposed vegetation which reduces the proportion of view the proposed development may populate. Short-distance views generally include the electricity pylons and overhead wires across the site.

## 8.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

### Overview

- 8.1 This landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) has been prepared to determine the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed development of land at Manor Farm, Noke, Oxfordshire.
- 8.2 Landscape assessment is the systematic description and analysis of the landscape resource, including physical features and elements of the landscape, of how their composition forms distinct areas of character, appraisal of quality and sensitivity, and the potential effect of the proposed development on the landscape. These elements include topography and landform, vegetation pattern, land use, hydrology; settlement pattern and transport; and public access.
- 8.3 Visual assessment is the description and analysis of the views experienced by receptors from residential properties, public buildings, public open spaces, public rights of way, open access areas and transport corridors and the potential effect of the proposed development on these receptors.
- 8.4 Principles and good practice for undertaking LVIA are set out in the Landscape Institute (LI) and the Institute of Environmental Management (IEMA) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA, 2013). The methodology used for this LVIA is based upon this guidance.

### Landscape Character

- 8.5 At a national level, the site is situated within the National Character Area (NCA) 108: Upper Thames Clay Vales. The site is located within the Wooded Farmlands, Alluvial Lowlands, River Meadowland and Farmland Hills landscape types (LT) within the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS). The Cherwell District Landscape Assessment (CDLA) identifies the site as within the Otmoor Lowlands landscape character area (LCA) and, at a more localised

level, the Elevated or low-lying arable farmlands with weak structure landscape character type (LCT) sub-type.

- 8.6 OWLS and CDLA identify the site to either lie in multiple areas of different character or near to boundaries which highlights the transitional nature of the local landscape in which the site is situated. This is predominantly associated with the difference between the river corridor/settlement area to the north, flat landform in which the majority of the site is situated, rising landform to the south-west and ecologically rich marshland of Otmoor to the east.
- 8.7 In terms of condition, the hedgerow vegetation across the site is generally fragmented and lost in places across the site, as stated in published guidance. The eastern part of the site, located within the Otmoor CTA, is generally in a good condition and has a strong relationship with the wider Otmoor landscape further to the east.
- 8.8 Due to the mature vegetation of the much of the northern settlement edge of Noke and alongside the River Ray south of Logg Farm, which creates localised containment of the site. Minor parts of views are available across the site towards built form in Noke and also the Church in Islip. Electricity pylons and overhead wires also run through the site which are detracting features. These elements influence the landscape character of the site and its local landscape context.
- 8.9 The assessment of impacts on landscape character has determined that the significance of effects on the Elevated or low-lying, arable farmland with weak structure LCT will be '**minor adverse**'. At year 10 after competition, the magnitude of impact of the proposed development will reduce, resulting in a '**negligible to minor adverse**' effect.
- 8.10 In order to consider impacts on landscape character at a more detailed level, this LVIA has also considered the character of the site and its local landscape context; at this level the assessment concludes that the proposed development will result in a '**moderate adverse**' effect. At year 10 after completion, the magnitude of the impact of the proposed development will reduce, resulting in

a '**minor to moderate adverse**' effect.

## **Visual Amenity**

- 8.11 A detailed analysis has been completed for a range of representative viewpoints, including reference to the sensitivity of the visual receptors and the nature and degree of the likely changes to the view.
- 8.12 Overall, the greatest degree of visual impact will be from those receptors along the PRoW network passing through the site itself and elevated receptors relative to the generally low-lying landscape in the study area. These include short-distance views from the Oxfordshire Way as it extends west from the settlement of Noke, the visual effects of which lessen as it continues north-west due to the falling elevation. It also includes long-distance views from the Oxfordshire Way and local road network near to Beckley to the south-east, which are within the context of existing development in the low-lying landscape.
- 8.13 The majority of other views towards the site in the local area are generally screened fully or in part by intervening existing and proposed vegetation which reduces the proportion of view the proposed development may populate. Short-distance views generally include the electricity pylons and overhead wires across the site and the majority of views are also within the context of existing built form.
- 8.14 All direct views of the proposed development will be highly localised and the consequential degree of impact arising from the proposed development would be expected with almost any development site which retains public access adjacent, or close to, its location.

## **Green Belt**

- 8.15 The site and study area lie within the Oxford Green Belt. The 2015 Oxford Green Belt Study identified the site as within 'Broad area 3', which had limited

contributions to the respective Green Belt purposes, as set out within the NPPF. The site was identified as having a 'high' contribution to Green Belt purpose 3, however all forms of development are likely to comprise encroachment to a greater or lesser extent. In this case, the site is extremely small relative to its Green Belt context, limiting this prospect. The mitigation strategy proposed will serve to assimilate it into the local and wider landscape in a manner consistent with local landscape character.

- 8.16 Insofar as landscape and visual matters are concerned, it is not considered that the proposed development is likely to unacceptably affect the purposes of the Green Belt.

## **Conclusion**

- 8.17 Overall, the proposed development will result in limited impacts at a localised level. The scale and form of proposed development is likely to result in impacts which are limited to the site area and its immediate context. In the wider landscape, potential views of the proposals are generally filtered by intervening vegetation. Those from elevated positions will be reduced by additional landscape planting along internal field boundaries within the site and along its boundaries.
- 8.18 A range of landscape and visual receptors have been tested and impacts have been identified for both landscape character and for visual receptors. This includes an iterative process whereby potential impacts have informed the landscape strategy for the site and mitigation has become ingrained in the proposed development. The residual impacts identified as part of this process highlight that the greater degree of impact relates to the site and to elevated receptors in a few locations in the surrounding area and due to landscape mitigation, the effects on which is generally limited.
- 8.19 Furthermore, the proposals for additional planting across the site will deliver substantial enhancements in terms of physical landscape resources. Such proposals will enhance the existing fragmented vegetation across the site to enhance local landscape character and the ecological enhancement area within

the northern part will create a high-quality transition to the wider landscape of Otmoor to the east and the River Ray to the north.

- 8.20 Given the limited adverse landscape and visual effects and the proposed development's mitigation the likely landscape and visual effects are considered to be acceptable in landscape and visual terms.

## **Appendix A: LVIA Methodology**



## **A. Appendix A: Landscape and visual effects detailed methodology (GLVIA3)**

### **A.1. INTRODUCTION**

A.1.1 This assessment aims to determine the likely effects of the proposed development on the existing landscape and visual receptors in the study area. The following landscape resources and visual receptors have been addressed:

- Physical landscape features and elements;
- Landscape character; and
- Views and visual amenity experienced by residents, recreational users (including visitors and tourists) and road users.

A.1.2 This assessment details the impacts that may result as a consequence of the proposed development and considers the likely significance of effect arising as a result.

### **A.2. APPROACH**

A.2.1 The approach and methodology used for this assessment has been developed in accordance with the guidance in the following documents:

- Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (April 2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition;
- Natural England (October 2014) An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment; and
- Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19: Visual Representation of Development Proposals (September 2019).

A.2.2 The overall approach to the identification and assessment of landscape and visual effects is summarised as follows:

- determining the scope of the assessment;
- collating baseline information for landscape and visual receptors, including completing desk study research and undertaking field-based survey work;
- review the proposed development and identify and describe the likely impacts of the proposed development (enabling specific judgments to be made on sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors);
- establish the sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors (balancing judgments on susceptibility and value);



- determine the magnitude of impacts (balancing judgments on size / scale, duration and reversibility);
- the assessment of the likely significance of landscape and visual effects through a balanced approach and clear description of judgments on sensitivity and magnitude; and
- the identification of measures to avoid or remedy impacts and the subsequent re-assessment of likely effects.

A.2.3 The following sections provide further detail on this approach.

### **Determining the Scope of Assessment**

#### ***Spatial Scope***

A.2.4 The spatial scope for the assessment has been determined by a two-staged approach. Firstly, a 'preliminary study area' is identified. This is based on the wider setting and context of the site and sets the broad parameters for collation of baseline information; this scope also accounts for the potential effects that will be generated by the proposed development.

A.2.5 In order to focus on the key sensitive receptors and likely effects the spatial scope of the preliminary study area is then refined through the initial stages of the assessment (i.e. desk study and field survey work).

A.2.6 The visual envelope of the site has been considered through desk top analysis of topographical data combined with field surveys to investigate visual enclosure arising from landform, vegetation and built form.

#### **Collating Baseline Information**

A.2.7 In order to capture a comprehensive description of the baseline position for landscape and visual receptors, information has been collated using desk study and field survey work. These processes include reference to published landscape character studies and a range of views and visual receptor types.

#### ***Desk Study***

A.2.8 The desk study has identified potentially sensitive landscape resources by reference to OS maps and existing published landscape character studies, relevant planning policy guidance and/or designated or protected views. This stage has also enabled the identification of potential visual receptors such as public rights of way (PROW), residential properties or designated areas.