

## **Appendix B**

LAND SOUTH OF HEYFORD GRANGE, LETCHMERE FARM, UPPER HEYFORD

Landscape & Visual Appraisal Addendum

September 2021

9712L.LVIA\_ADD.003



LAND AT LARSEN ROAD,  
UPPER HEYFORD

## **Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment – ADDENDUM**

September 2021  
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## **CONTENTS**

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	REVIEW OF BASELINE ASSESSMENT	5
3	THE REVISED PROPOSALS	11
4	UPDATED ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE & VISUAL EFFECTS	13
5	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	25

## **APPENDICES**

<b>APPENDIX 1</b>	Previous 77 unit scheme
<b>APPENDIX 2</b>	Revised 89 unit scheme
<b>APPENDIX 3</b>	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology
<b>APPENDIX 4</b>	Extract from OWLS assessment: "Farmland Plateau" Landscape Type
<b>APPENDIX 5</b>	Updated Photographic Record

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background

- 1.1.1. ES Landscape Planning Ltd was instructed by Pye Homes Ltd to review the potential landscape and visual effects arising from a revised layout in relation to their site at Larsen Road, Upper Heyford.
- 1.1.2. By way of background, an application for 79 residential properties was submitted to Cherwell District Council in 2015. This was accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) prepared by Anthony Stiff Associates (ASA). The layout was revised in response to consultee comments, reducing the number of units to 77. The revised scheme was submitted during 2017 and, as part of this submission, the ASA LVIA was updated to take account of the changes.
- 1.1.3. The 2017 ASA LVIA concluded that:

**“8.1 In terms of impacts on local landscape character, the development lies on the edge of a significant existing area of development and former military infrastructure. The whole area is undergoing major change and is rapidly evolving into a mix of housing and commercial land uses, lessening the dominance of the former Cold War air base. The proposed site is immediately adjacent to the edge of the former base and to some degree sits within a relatively well contained pocket of landscape between the east edge of the base and the northern arm of the base where the former runway and bomb bunkers extend eastwards. There is a static caravan park to the south of the site. The Site itself can be described as transitional between this urban / military influence and the countryside.**

**Application have been proposed immediately to the east and north of the site but with no forth coming development at the current time.**

**8.2 The landscape has no statutory designations. The overall impact on the local landscape is assessed as being Moderate Minor. The site itself would undergo significant change, but the effects beyond the site would only be local in their extent. The site has been described on the CDC Landscape Assessment as being within the 'Reconstruction' category which is the lowest end of the 4 point scale provided in terms of landscape condition. *‘These landscapes have a high capacity to accommodate change because they have already lost their intrinsic character.***

***They would gain very positive benefits from the introduction of new character and strong sense of place'. However it is recognised that the landscape of the site is transitional in nature and that to the east positive rural characteristics are dominant.***

**8.3 In terms of visual impact, the development would have some local adverse effects on a limited number of receptors. Local residential receptors would experience, at worst, a moderate major adverse impact which, over time would be likely to lessen as boundary screening becomes established.**

**8.4 In planning policy terms the development generally supports the aims of NPPF 109, relevant saved local plan policies, and other policies in the Non Statutory Cherwell Local Plan and the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031.**

**8.5 The factors of site layout, density and mitigation will, in combination, play an important part in delivering an appropriate development that will respond to the topography of the site and the surrounding landscape context. Impacts of the development would be confined to local views and local impacts on the landscape. Nevertheless the treatment of the site boundaries, the detailed design and attention to detail during the implementation and aftercare of the landscape areas will determine the success or otherwise of this proposal. In general the development supports a number of key statements set out in the CDC Countryside Design Summary specifically with regard to the location of the development and the design considerations.**

**8.6 The findings of this report have informed the design team setting out the main issues in terms of both landscape and visual impacts. The agreed mitigation around the boundaries of the site have addressed the concerns highlighted including those expressed by the Local Planning Authority, and will provide a buffer and robust element of green infrastructure that will be essential to create a strong new edge to the site. This will in effect move the edge of the housing based around Camp Road 120m east, opposite to the Caravan Park site. As previously stated this can be seen as a positive benefit in creating an integrated housing landscape wrapping round this side of the former base and thereby diluting its dominance."**

- 1.1.4. It is noted that CDC's landscape officers did not raise any objections to the principle of development on this site, but sought clarification in relation to playspace provision,

relationship between the proposed properties and the western boundary, connectivity through the site and the relationship between the proposed pumping station and nearby proposed properties. A review of the officer's comments dated 16<sup>th</sup> June 2017 suggests that the officer was content that the revised layout appropriately dealt with their previous concerns. The 77 unit layout is included in Appendix 1 for reference.

- 1.1.5. To ensure that the proposed development is compliant with the NPPF and makes the best use of the site, the proposed layout has been revisited and tested with the previous principles also taken into account.
- 1.1.6. ES Landscape Planning was brought on board at an early stage to inform the design development of the layout from a landscape and visual perspective. As part of our initial work we reviewed the previous proposals and the ASA LVIA that accompanied the 2017 submission. This review has informed the emerging layout ensuring that the playspace and landscape principles that were adopted as part of the 2017 layout have been applied to the updated scheme.
- 1.1.7. Through a detailed review of individual plots, and in response to current housing requirements in the District, the number of units proposed within the site has increased to 89. The revised layout is included in Appendix 2.
- 1.1.8. The purpose of this addendum is to introduce the revised scheme and assess whether the 2021 layout would give rise to any landscape and / or visual effects beyond those identified within the 2017 ASA LVIA.
- 1.1.9. While this Addendum does not represent a full LVIA, the assessment within this document has been undertaken by chartered landscape architects in accordance with an established methodology that has been developed in line with the guidance set out in GLVIA3. The assessment methodology is included in Appendix 3 for reference.

## 1.2. **Approach**

- 1.2.1. This LVIA Addendum will take the following format:
  - Introduce the site within its current landscape and visual baseline context;
  - Introduction of the updated proposed development, including the proposed landscape strategy;

- Assess any potential landscape and / or visual effects beyond those identified within the 2017 LVIA and make reference to landscape related planning policy, which has been adopted since the previous submission; and
- The conclusions of the assessment will be set out.

1.2.2. This assessment forms part of the suite of documents submitted as part of the planning application, and should be reviewed alongside the other submissions that accompany the application.



## 2. BASELINE ASSESSMENT

### 2.1. The Site

2.1.1. The site lies immediately to the east of the former Upper Heyford Air Base, approximately 5km to the north west of Bicester. The site currently comprises approximately 3.2ha of improved grassland which lies to the east of the former officer's housing. Camp Road defines the southern extent of the site, with a mobile home site located on the southern side of the road corridor. A localised watercourse defines the eastern boundary, separating the site from a larger arable field which lies to the west of Chilgrove Drive. Letchmere Farm and several paddocks lie to the north of the site and separate it from the former runway and associated buildings which are now used for a variety of commercial enterprises. The site is illustrated in its localised context on Figure 1 below. The localised context of the site has not materially changed since the 2017 ASA LVIA.



Figure 1: Site Context Plan

2.1.2. The site forms part of a wider masterplan for the former Upper Heyford air base, which has outline consent for 761 dwellings. The site would form the south eastern extent of the wider development, with new residential development extending north and west across the former air base. The site-wide masterplan is illustrated below

(refer Figure 2), with the application site coloured pale brown on the south eastern edge of the wider development.

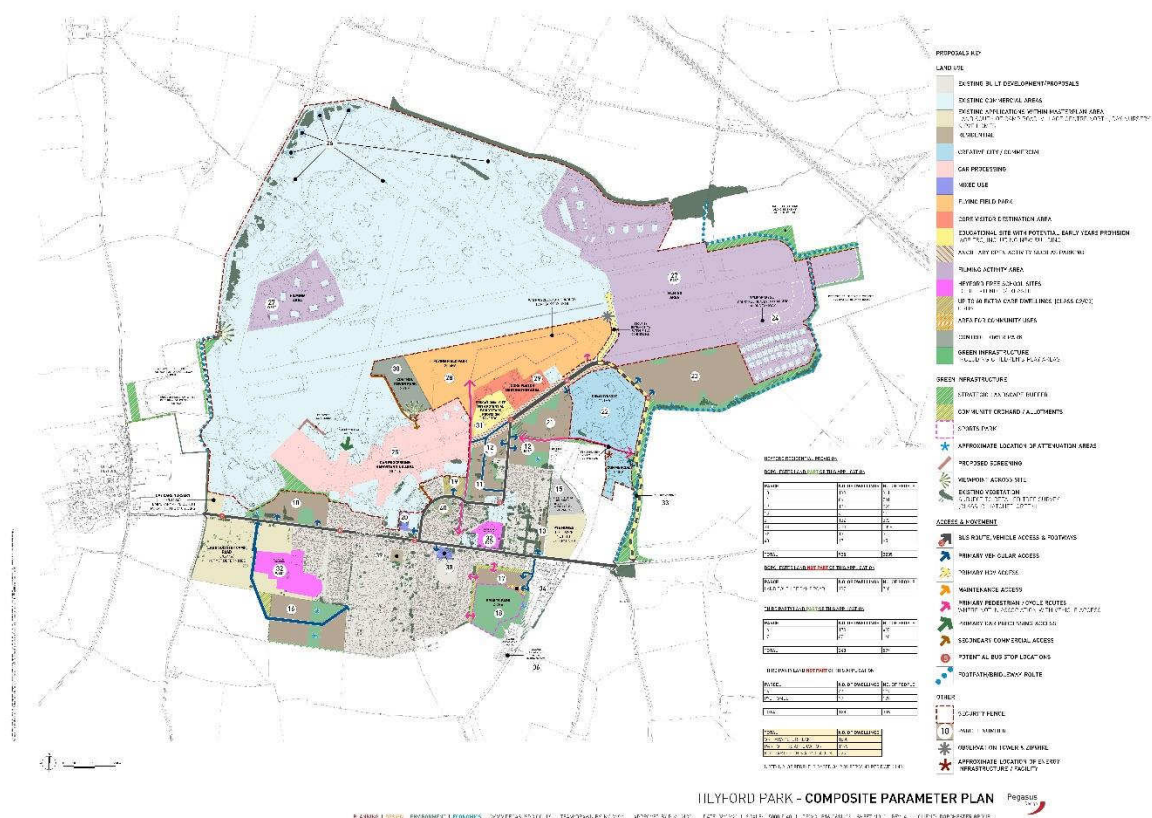


Figure 2: Upper Heyford Site-wide Masterplan

## 2.2. Landscape Related Policy Background

- 2.2.1. The site is covered by the saved policies of the Cherwell Local Plan (December 2016). This had recently been adopted at the time the ASA LVIA was published. The non-statutory Local Plan and 1996 Local Plan, referred to in the ASA LVIA, are now no longer relevant to the site or the proposals. The NPPF has also been revised with the aims and objectives previously covered by para 109, now covered by para 170.
- 2.2.2. The site is not covered by any qualitative landscape designations.
- 2.2.3. Much of the land to the north and west of the site, associated with the former air base is designated as a Conservation Area.

- 2.2.4. Policy ESD 13 of the adopted Local Plan relates to local landscape protection and enhancement and sets out a number of requirements for new development to ensure the long term protection of the landscape of the District.
- 2.2.5. It is also noted that, since the ASA LVIA was undertaken, the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan, which covers a number of parishes to the west of Bicester, has been Made by CDC (May 2019). It is noted that the Plan includes a “zone of non-coalescence” which lies to the west of RAF Upper Heyford, to maintain separation between the air base and the village of Upper Heyford to the west. The site is not covered by any similar designations and would not give rise to the coalescence of Heyford Park with any surrounding settlements. The site is also located away from the protected skylines and church spires identified on Figure 8 of the Neighbourhood Plan. The site is also not located within the context of any key views or vistas identified within the Neighbourhood Plan or the RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area Appraisal (2006).
- 2.2.6. A detailed appraisal of relevant planning policy is included within the planning statement prepared by Terence O’ Rourke that accompanies the planning application.

### 2.3. **Landscape Character**

- 2.3.1. The ASA LVIA identifies that the site lies within the “Farmland Plateau” landscape type (LT) as identified by the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS). The previous LVIA also makes reference to the 1995 Cherwell District Landscape Character Assessment, although this now appears to have been superseded by the OWLS assessment and removed from CDC’s website. An extract from the OWLS study is included in Appendix 4 for reference.
- 2.3.2. The ASA LVIA then goes on to assess the value, susceptibility and sensitivity of the landscape in which the site is set. The ASA LVIA concludes that the landscape value of the site and its immediate setting are of medium – low value due to the presence of the air base and the fact that this is not a rare or designated landscape.
- 2.3.3. In terms of susceptibility, this is identified as being medium – low. The ASA LVIA identifies that the site is influenced by the development of the air base, set within a larger scale, fragmented landscape. The perception of a rural character increases with distance, however, the proximity of the site to the air base means that the

buildings and boundary features of the neighbouring air base are prominent, forming an ever present backdrop. The ASA LVIA concludes that the susceptibility of the site to change of the type proposed is medium – low.

- 2.3.4. The ASA LVIA concludes that the sensitivity of the landscape of the site is **Medium – Low** with the ability to accommodate some change arising from a sensitively designed layout. Very little has changed within the context of the site since it was assessed by ASA in 2017. Some construction work associated with the redevelopment of the air base has occurred to the north west of the site, but this does not significantly alter the perceived character of the site and its setting beyond what was identified in the original LVIA. Given that the landscape baseline remains broadly the same, ES Landscape Planning concur with the judgements of value, susceptibility and sensitivity as set out within the ASA LVIA.

## 2.4. The Visual Environment

- 2.4.1. The ASA LVIA identified a series of viewpoints illustrating the site and its localised setting, taken from largely publicly accessible locations. The viewpoints sought to reflect the views of the site by more sensitive receptors, such as walkers on the local public right of way network, however, the viewpoints are considered representative and not exhaustive. The extent of the proposals and scale of proposed development has not changed between the 2017 and current schemes and, as such, it is considered that the coverage of viewpoints within the ASA LVIA remains appropriate. It is noted that the CDC Landscape Officer did not raise any issues with the identified viewpoints in the 2017 assessment. ES Landscape Planning has returned to site to retake the photographs to ensure that any recent changes in the localised setting are picked up.
- 2.4.2. The viewpoints are illustrated on the Viewpoint Location Plan (9712L.VLP.003) within Appendix 5. The photographs were taken in April 2021. The day was clear with good visibility. While the site visit was undertaken during the spring, much of the localised vegetation was yet to come into leaf and, as such, closely reflect winter views.
- 2.4.3. The photographs were taken with a Canon 35mm equivalent digital SLR. The camera is a cropped sensor model so, in line with Landscape Institute TGN 06/19 – Visual Representation of Development Proposals, the photographs were taken at 35mm. The photographs are presented in Appendix 5 at a scale whereby they can be viewed at a distance of 260mm to represent the view from the particular location. The extent

of the site / proposed development is indicated on the photographs to assist the viewer's understanding of where the site / proposals sit within the context of the view. It must be noted that the photographs are illustrative and do not replace visiting the viewpoints in person. Table 1, below, sets out the viewpoint locations, key receptors and assessed sensitivity.

Table 1: Baseline Viewpoints

Viewpoint	Location	Key Receptors	Receptor Sensitivity
1	Larsen Road, next to the former Officer's Quarters Houses within the former air base, approximately 40m to the west of the site (not a public viewpoint)	Residents	Medium - High
2	Southern side of Camp Road, approximately 10m to the south of the site	Residents and motorists	Medium – High
3	Drive to Letchmere Farm, within the southern extent of the site, looking south (not a public viewpoint)	Residents	Medium – High
4	Southern side of Camp Road, approximately 10m to the south of the site	Motorists	Low
5	Camp Road, approximately 160m to the east of the site	Motorists	Low
6	Camp Road, at the junction with the B430, approximately 230m to the east of the site	Motorists	Low
7	B430 approximately 485m to the east of the site	Motorists	Low
8	Bridleway 109/28/10, approximately 530m to the east of the site	Walkers and riders	Medium - High

9	Chilgrove Drive, approximately 270m to the north east of the site	Walkers	Low
10	Bridleway 388/7/10, approximately 220m to the south east of the site	Walkers and riders	Medium - High
11	Drive to Letchmere Farm, approximately 80m to the north of the site (not a public viewpoint)	Residents	Medium - High
12	Bridleway 109/28/10, approximately 665m to the east of the site	Walkers and riders	Medium - High
13	Bridleway 109/28/10, approximately 840m to the east of the site	Walkers and riders	Medium - High

2.4.4. As illustrated by the Photographic Record and Table 1, views of the site are highly localised as a result of the built form associated with the air base, limited public access and vegetation cover that characterises the immediate setting of the site. Section 4.3 of this LVIA assesses the potential effects of the proposals upon these views.



### 3. THE PROPOSALS

- 3.1. The proposed layout has been revisited and tested from a landscape, highways, ecology and housing supply perspective. It is considered that the site could deliver up to 89 units and this is illustrated on the Coleman Hicks Partnership (CHP) layout which is included within Appendix 2.
- 3.2. The revised layout is illustrated next to the previous 77 unit scheme below for comparison purposes.



Figure 3: Proposed Site Plan Comparison – 2017 layout on the left, 2021 layout on the right

- 3.3. The revised layout would:
- Maintain a green corridor along the eastern boundary for habitat creation and informal recreation;
  - Achieve an appropriate offset from the western boundary to ensure that a new, native boundary hedge could be established along this edge, softening the perception of the proposals;
  - Ensure that a LAP and a LEAP can be integrated into the development in accordance with CDC's requirements, taking account of the necessary buffers from the nearest habitable rooms;

- Ensure that a network of useable green spaces are incorporated through the development, to break up the proposed built environment and provide informal recreation opportunities;
  - Provide space for internal landscape treatment, including street trees and appropriate native boundary planting.
- 3.4. The revised scheme maintains a green corridor through the development, creating an attractive approach into the site from Camp Road, setting built form back from the streetscene with swales and street tree planting providing a landscaped route with the formal playspace defining the “green heart” of the development. The estate road has been revised to reduce its straightness and, as a result, the central green space has been enlarged, rather than being split by the road.
- 3.5. The main difference between the two schemes, from a landscape perspective, is the interface with the southern boundary and Camp Road. There is a 6m wide farm access easement which crosses the southern edge of the site, running parallel with Camp Road, from the centre line of the existing hedge. The proposed access into the development from Camp Road also has visibility splays which extend across the existing boundary hedgerow and, as such, would require some removal. As part of the wider Upper Heyford masterplan a new footway is also to be provided which extends east, along the northern side of Camp Road. The presence of the 6m farm access easement behind the existing hedge precludes the planting of a new hedgerow behind the sight lines and new footway, as such, provision has been made to include planting to the fronts of the properties which front onto Camp Road. The proposed dwellings have been oriented to provide an active frontage to the existing streetscene, set back behind a reinforced grass area which maintains farm access while giving the impression of a verge. The previous scheme had properties fronting onto Camp Road and located the treatment plant in the south eastern corner, however, it did not seem to take account of the easement, visibility splays or new footway and, as such, indicated that the exiting hedgerow could be retained. The proposals adopt a low density, landscaped interface with Camp Road, ensuring that the approaches to Upper Heyford from the east are not adversely affected.
- 3.6. The potential effects of the revised scheme upon the character and appearance of the landscape are dealt with in further detail in Section 4 of this Addendum.



## **4. ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE & VISUAL EFFECTS**

### **4.1. Background**

- 4.1.1. In line with the guidance in GLVIA3, it is appropriate to assess the effect of the proposed development upon the baseline landscape character and visual environment as identified in Section 2 of the LVIA. This Addendum will review the assessment of effects within the ASA LVIA and assess whether the revised scheme would give rise to any additional effects above those identified within the 2017 assessment.

### **4.2. Effect upon Landscape Character**

- 4.2.1. As noted within Section 2, the site is located within the “Farmland Plateau” LT as identified by the OWLS assessment. It is noted that the OWLS assessment does not provide an assessment of sensitivity.
- 4.2.2. The proposals would not affect any of the key characteristics of this Landscape Type. The site gently falls to the east, towards a localised watercourse. The proposals would not require any significant ground remodelling that would affect the perception of the gently rolling ridges dissected by narrow valleys and broader vales that characterise the “Farmland Plateau”. The site currently comprises an area of improved, species poor grassland, which is influenced by the air base to the west and the watercourse to the east. The development of the site for residential uses would change the character of the site internally, but would not affect the perception of large scale arable fields that characterise the wider landscape type. There are no shelter belts associated with the site and the proposals would not affect the perception of long straight roads extending out from the settlement. The OWLS assessment notes that this is a sparsely settled landscape, however, the proposals would be located immediately adjacent to the established settlement edge which extends east, up to the watercourse, to the south of the site and influences the immediate landscape setting to the west. The proposals would not affect the perception of a sparsely settled landscape beyond the nucleated settlements associated with the “Farmland Plateau”.
- 4.2.3. The OWLS assessment sets out a series of Landscape Guidelines which seek to conserve the character of the “Farmland Plateau”. The proposals would avoid any tree planting on the characteristic ridgelines of the LT, instead focusing new planting

around the edges of the development to ensure its integration into the localised setting and soften the perceived built edge of the air base. The eastern boundary would be reinforced with new planting where gaps exist and new hedgerows would be incorporated along the northern and western boundaries, reinforcing the perceived field pattern. The proposals also present the opportunity to enhance the management of the existing eastern boundary hedgerow, establishing an appropriate management regime for this feature. There are no stone walls or quarries associated with the site or its setting that would be affected by the proposals.

- 4.2.4. The guidelines seek to conserve all remaining areas of semi-improved grassland. Clearly the proposals would result in the loss of much of the grassland currently associated with the site, however, this habitat is not considered rare or representative of this landscape type and is of limited ecological value. This land use is not identified as a key characteristic of the “Farmland Plateau”. This land use is also typical of land immediately adjacent to existing settlements and it is considered that the proposals would not result in significant adverse effects upon the character of the wider landscape. The proposals would be located immediately adjacent to the settlement edge of Heyford Park and would not affect the perception of a sparsely settled landscape beyond the established settlements within the landscape type. There are also opportunities for including a sensitive palette of materials that reflect the local vernacular, ensuring that the proposals complement the more established parts of Upper Heyford and this part of the District.
- 4.2.5. It is considered that the proposals would give rise to a negligible magnitude of change within the immediate setting of the site, however, the proposals would not affect the key characteristics that define the “Farmland Plateau” landscape type.
- 4.2.6. The ASA LVIA concludes that the 77 unit scheme would give rise to an overall magnitude of change of Medium – Low, which would result in an effect of Moderate / Minor significance. The assessment acknowledges that the proposals would change the character of the site from a field to a residential development, however, the geographical extent to which this would be perceived would be small as a result of the built environment of the air base and natural features to the east and south of the site. It is acknowledged that some change would be perceived from the public realm to the east, but this would reduce in time as a result of the proposed mitigation associated with the eastern boundary. The location of the site immediately adjacent to the air base present the opportunity to create a more sympathetic edge between the settlement and the wider landscape to the east.

- 4.2.7. It is considered that the revised 89 unit scheme is not materially different to the 77 unit scheme from a landscape perspective, effectively changing some of the previously proposed house-types to make a more efficient layout. The revised scheme would not extend the perception of development beyond those extents identified within the 2017 assessment. The eastern boundary hedgerow would continue to be retained and reinforced with new planting and an appropriate management regime. The proposals continue to be 2 storeys in height and would not be any more prominent within the context of the wider landscape to the east.
- 4.2.8. It is noted that the revised scheme would result in the removal of much of the southern boundary hedgerow to accommodate the new access (and associated sight lines) and the proposed footway along Camp Road which forms part of the wider Heyford Park masterplan. Opportunities to reinstate the hedgerow behind the footway are limited due to the presence of the agricultural access easement. As such the proposed layout has sought to provide new hedgerow planting along the plot boundaries which front onto Camp Road. The presence of the easement ensures that the proposed built form would be set back from the road corridor, ensuring that the proposals do not appear prominent or overbearing on the approach to Heyford Park and Upper Heyford from the east. The easement would be surfaced with a reinforced grass base ensuring a green frontage to the site and avoiding extensive areas of hardstanding. It is noted that the proposals would change the approach to the settlement from the localised setting of Camp Road, immediately to the south east and south of the site, however, the mature vegetation structure that lines the northern side of the road, to the east of the site, would ensure that this perceived change is highly localised.
- 4.2.9. It is considered that the revised scheme would give rise to a Medium – Low magnitude of change, as the proposals would represent a perceptible change within the context of the site, but would constitute only a minor component within the localised setting. It is considered that, when the sensitivity of the landscape receptor is taken into account, the proposals would give rise to an effect of **Moderate / Minor Adverse** significance, as it is considered that the landscape receptor has the ability to accommodate sensitively designed development which also incorporates a comprehensive scheme of landscaping.
- 4.2.10. In conclusion, it is considered that the revised scheme would not give rise to any greater effects upon the receiving landscape character than those identified within

the 2017 ASA LVIA. It is acknowledged that the revised scheme would change the interface between the site and Camp Road immediately adjacent to the site. However, the perception of this change would be highly localised and seen within the context of the settlement edge to the south of the streetscene, characterised by the caravan park, which extends Heyford Park up to the localised watercourse which also forms the eastern boundary of the site. The site and its localised setting are characterised by the existing air base and the proposals present the opportunity to introduce a high quality residential development, that contributes to housing provision within Cherwell, and would create an appropriate transition between the higher density development of Heyford Park and the wider landscape to the east.

- 4.2.11. While it is acknowledged that the proposals would result in the loss of an area of species-poor grassland, this landcover is not considered rare or ecologically valuable, and any greenfield development, no matter the scale, would result in some perceived change. However, the National Planning Policy Framework does not protect green fields for their own sake. Furthermore, the site is located immediately adjacent to the settlement edge, forming part of the wider Upper Heyford masterplan. The proposed development would not affect the key characteristics of the wider “Farmland Plateau” landscape type, as identified by the OWLS assessment, and could be integrated into the localised landscape without giving rise to significant adverse effects.

### 4.3. Effect upon the Visual Environment

- 4.3.1. Table 2, below, assesses the effect of the proposed development upon the identified key views which are included within Appendix 5. The assessment cross refers to the findings within the 2017 ASA LVIA to enable a direct comparison between the assessments. Where our findings differ from the 2017 assessment the overall effect identified by the ASA LVIA is shown in blue while the ES Landscape Planning assessment is shown in green. Where judgements concur with the ASA LVIA, the magnitude of change and overall effects are shown in black.

*Table 2: Assessment of Visual Effects*

Viewpoint	Location	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Overall Effect
1	Larsen Road, next to the former Officer's Quarters	Medium - High	Medium – Low	Year One – <b>Moderate</b>

	Houses within the former air base, approximately 40m to the west of the site (not a public viewpoint)			Year Ten – <b>Moderate / Minor</b>
<i>Assessment:</i> ESLP concurs with the findings of the ASA LVIA and the revised scheme would not appear any more prominent than the 77 unit scheme. The previous LVIA did not assess the potential effect of the proposals upon this view at Year 10, however, it is considered that as the proposed planting along the western boundary matures it would further assist the integration of the proposed built form reducing the overall perceived effect.				
2	Southern side of Camp Road, approximately 10m to the south of the site	Medium - High	Medium - High	Year One – <b>Moderate / Major</b>
				Year Ten – <b>Moderate</b>
<i>Assessment:</i> ESLP concurs with the findings of the 2017 LVIA with regard to the overall effect of the proposals upon this view. The revised scheme reflects a similar set back from Camp Road to the previous scheme in this location and while the proposals would give rise to a moderate / major effect at Year One, as the proposed planting matures and the built form weathers, the overall effect would reduce to moderate by Year Ten.				
3	Drive to Letchmere Farm, within the southern extent of the site, looking south (not a public viewpoint)	Medium - High	Medium – High	Year One – <b>Moderate</b>
				Year Ten – <b>Moderate / Minor</b>
<i>Assessment:</i> The ASA LVIA did not assess this viewpoint. The viewpoint is located at the southern edge of the proposed development on the northern side of the agricultural access easement. From this location, the removal of the frontage hedgerow to accommodate the site access visibility splays and footway along Camp Road (proposed as part of the wider Heyford Park masterplan) would open up views of the road corridor at Year One, however, this is not a public viewpoint and, as such, the extent to which this change would be perceived would be reduced. The farm track would be grassed over using a native flowering lawn mix and as this establishes it would create a species-rich frontage to the site.				
4	Southern side of Camp Road, approximately 10m to the south of the site	Low	Medium – Low	Year One – <b>Minor</b>
			Medium - High	<b>Moderate</b>
				Year Ten – <b>Moderate / Minor</b>

<i>Assessment:</i> It is considered that the loss of the frontage hedgerow to accommodate the site access visibility splays and footway along Camp Road (proposed as part of the wider Heyford Park masterplan) would open up views of the proposed built form at Year One. As such the potential magnitude of change and overall effect is elevated when compared to the 2017 assessment which assessed the effects on the assumption that the hedgerow could be retained. However, this is a fleeting view and the sensitivity of the receptors is reduced. The proposals would be set back from the road corridor with opportunities for new planting to the property frontages as the planting matures it would assist the integration of the built form and create a high quality entrance to both the site and the wider Heyford Park development.				
5	Camp Road, approximately 160m to the east of the site	Low	Medium – High	Year One – <b>Moderate / Minor</b>
			Medium – Low	Year Ten - <b>Minor</b>
<i>Assessment:</i> From this viewpoint the intervening roadside hedgerow, to the east of the site, would assist in containing views of the proposals, even during the winter. Some glimpsed views of the proposals would be possible but they would be seen within the wider context of Heyford Park and the air base, forming a backdrop to the site.				
6	Camp Road, at the junction with the B430, approximately 230m to the east of the site	Low	Medium – High	Year One – <b>Moderate / Minor</b>
			Medium	Year Ten - <b>Minor</b>
<i>Assessment:</i> As with Viewpoint 5, the intervening roadside hedgerow, to the east of the site, would assist in containing views of the proposals, even during the winter. Some glimpsed views of the proposals would be possible but they would be seen within the wider context of Heyford Park and the air base, forming a backdrop to the site.				
7	B430 approximately 485m to the east of the site	Low	Low	Year One – <b>Minor</b>
				Year Ten - <b>Negligible</b>
<i>Assessment:</i> From this location the intervening distance and vegetation structure to the east of the site would contain views of much of the proposed development. Some glimpsed views of the proposed roofscape may be possible during the winter, however, the proposals would not break the skyline and would be seen against the wider backdrop of Heyford Park.				
8	Bridleway 109/28/10, approximately 530m to the east of the site	Medium - High	Medium – Low  Low	Year One – <b>Moderate</b>  <b>Moderate / Minor</b>

				Year Ten – <b>Moderate / Minor</b>  <b>Minor</b>
<p><i>Assessment:</i> As with Viewpoint 7, the intervening distance and vegetation structure to the east of the site would contain views of much of the proposed development from this location. Some glimpsed views of the proposed roofscape may be possible during the winter, however, the proposals would not break the skyline and would be seen against the wider backdrop of Heyford Park.</p>				
9	Chilgrove Drive, approximately 270m to the north east of the site	Low	<b>Medium – High</b>  <b>Medium</b>	Year One – <b>Moderate / Minor</b> Year Ten – <b>Minor</b>
<p><i>Assessment:</i> Views of the proposals from Chilgrove Drive would be limited due to the established nature of the hedgerow which lines the western side of the streetscene. Where views are possible the proposals would be seen in the context of the wider Heyford Park development to the west. As the proposed planting along the eastern boundary, and within the site, matures it would further integrate the proposed built form and the overall effect would reduce.</p>				
10	Bridleway 388/7/10, approximately 220m to the south east of the site	Medium - High	Low	Year One – <b>Moderate / Minor</b> Year Ten – <b>Minor</b>
<p><i>Assessment:</i> The intervening mature hedgerows associated with Camp Road, to the east and south of the site, would assist in containing views of the proposals, even during the winter. Some glimpsed views of the proposals would be possible, but they would be seen within the wider context of Heyford Park and the air base, forming a backdrop to the site.</p>				
11	Drive to Letchmere Farm, approximately 80m to the north of the site (not a public viewpoint)	Medium - High	Medium - High	Year One – <b>Moderate / Major</b> Year Ten - <b>Moderate</b>
<p><i>Assessment:</i> The proposals would introduce residential built form into the middle ground of this view, representing a notable degree of change. However, this is not a public view and the built form associated with the air base lies immediately to the right of this view and the caravan park forms a backdrop. This is not a distinctly rural landscape, and it has capacity to accommodate the type of change being proposed. As the landscape proposals to the northern boundary mature the perceived built edge would be softened and an appropriate transition achieved.</p>				

12	Bridleway 109/28/10, approximately 665m to the east of the site	Medium - High	No Change	None
Assessment: The intervening topography would contain views of the proposals from this location.				
13	Bridleway 109/28/10, approximately 840m to the east of the site	Medium - High	Low  Negligible	Year One –  Moderate / Minor  Minor
				Year Ten – Minor  Negligible
Assessment: Given the intervening distance and vegetation structure, together with the backdrop of Heyford Park to the west, it is considered that the proposals would not materially affect this view. While there may be some glimpsed views of the proposed roofscape during the winter, the proposals would not break the vegetated skyline. As the proposed planting on the eastern boundary matures, this would further break up the perceived built edge.				

4.3.2. As an overview, as identified within the 2017 ASA LVIA, there would be some moderate / major effects upon the visual environment at Year One. However, these are highly localised viewpoints, located immediately adjacent to the site and, as the proposed landscaping matures, the perceived effect would reduce, and the proposals could be integrated without significant adverse effects. The perceived overall effect would reduce with distance from the site as intervening topography and vegetation cover break up views of the proposals. Views of the site are already highly localised as a result of the topography, built form, vegetation structure and limited public access that characterises the sites setting. It is considered that the proposals can be integrated without giving rise to any long term, significant adverse effects.

4.3.3. The revised scheme is very similar to the 2017 layout in terms of height, scale and massing of the proposed built form and this is reflected in the broadly similar judgements made between the ASA LVIA and this Addendum. The only view where there is some difference of opinion is Viewpoint 4, which is located just to the south of the south eastern corner of the site, looking west along Camp Road. It is considered that the effect of the proposed access (and associated sight lines) and the footway which forms part of the wider Heyford Park masterplan which would



require the removal of much of the frontage hedgerow would result in a medium – high magnitude of change. However, this is a view from Camp Road and the primary receptors would be motorists passing through the landscape at speed. These receptors are considered to be less sensitive to change. The viewer would also be aware of the approaching settlement so the proposals would not introduce any new or alien components into the context of this view. There is scope for new planting to the frontages of the plots that front onto Camp Road and as this planting matures it would form an attractive setting for the road corridor and approach to Heyford Park. It is concluded that the proposals can be integrated without significant adverse effects upon this view.

- 4.3.4. Overall, it is considered that the revised scheme would not give rise to any greater effects than those identified within the 2017 assessment. It is concluded that the proposals can be integrated without significant adverse effects upon the receiving visual environment.

#### 4.4. Effect upon Landscape Related Policy

- 4.4.1. In terms of the effect upon national and local landscape related policy, the site and its setting are not covered by any qualitative landscape designations.
- 4.4.2. As set out in Section 2, it is considered that the site and its setting do not represent a “valued landscape” in the context of Para 170a of the NPPF.
- 4.4.3. Para 170b of the NPPF requires development to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. As set out within this assessment, it is considered that the proposals can be integrated without long term adverse effects upon those landscape receptors which characterise the site and its wider landscape setting. It is concluded that the proposals would not harm the intrinsic character or beauty of the countryside in which the site is set.
- 4.4.4. Policy ESD 13 of the adopted Local Plan seeks to protect and enhance the landscape of the District. The policy states that:

**“Opportunities will be sought to secure the enhancement of the character and appearance of the landscape, particularly in urban fringe locations, through the restoration, management or enhancement of existing landscapes, features or**

**habitats and where appropriate the creation of new ones, including the planting of woodlands, trees and hedgerows.**

**Development will be expected to respect and enhance local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. Proposals will not be permitted if they would:**

- **Cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside**
- **Cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography**
- **Be inconsistent with local character**
- **Impact on areas judged to have a high level of tranquillity**
- **Harm the setting of settlements, buildings, structures or other landmark features, or Harm the historic value of the landscape.**

**Development proposals should have regard to the information and advice contained in the Council's Countryside Design Summary Supplementary Planning Guidance, and the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS), and be accompanied by a landscape assessment where appropriate."**

- 4.4.5. As set out earlier in this section, the proposals have been assessed in terms of their potential effect upon the receiving landscape character and the visual environment. The assessment identifies that, while there would be some change within the immediate site, the proposals have been carefully designed to respect the characteristic treescape and hedgerows, and present the opportunity to enhance features like the hedgerows through additional planting and improved management.
- 4.4.6. Policy ESD 13 makes reference to proposals that would give rise to undue harm or intrusion upon the countryside would not be appropriate. Undue is defined as being unwarranted or inappropriate because it is excessive or disproportionate. As is set out in this assessment, the proposals would not give rise to *undue* visual intrusion nor would they cause *undue* harm to important natural landscape features of topography or vegetation cover. The proposals would not be at odds with the identified characteristics of the local landscape, as identified by the OWLS assessment, and would not affect the tranquillity of the area, located in a settlement fringe landscape. The proposals would not affect the settled character of the landscape, nor would they adversely affect the setting of Heyford Park or Upper Heyford or any heritage assets and would not give rise to the coalescence of Heyford

Park and any neighbouring settlements. It is considered that the proposals comply with Policy ESD 13.

- 4.4.7. Policy PD3 of the Made Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan relates to development adjacent to Heyford Park and identifies that any new development should avoid the coalescence of Heyford Park and Upper Heyford or any other neighbouring settlements. As noted above, the location of the site immediately to the east of Heyford Park would ensure that the proposals do not result in any coalescence or merging of settlements. It is noted that para 3.2.20 relates to Policy PD3 and states that:

**“The aspects of landscape character that could be adversely affected by the encroachment of further development extending the current boundary of Heyford Park include the following:**

- visual intrusion into the open countryside**
- loss of tranquillity**
- harm to the historic and archaeological context of the countryside**
- loss of access to the countryside for the inhabitants of the settlements (an issue that would grow in importance as a result of an expanded development). In particular, threat to the retention of local public footpaths (some of which provide walks with excellent views across the Cherwell Valley of its open landscape character, or of the Upland topography of the landscape to the north of the strategic site).**
- harm to the setting and rural character of the settlements, including adverse impact on Conservation Areas and listed buildings. Some areas of settlement close to Heyford Park do not benefit from being located in village Conservation Areas.”**

- 4.4.8. It is considered that the proposed development of the site would not compromise the landscape setting of Upper Heyford or Heyford Park and would not give rise to the perception of development extending into the open countryside or the loss of tranquillity. There are no heritage assets associated with the site and the proposals would not affect the public’s ability to access the countryside. It is concluded that the proposals comply with the aims and objectives of the Made Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan.

- 4.4.9. National and local policy seek to achieve high quality and sustainable development. It is considered that the revised proposals would not give rise to any greater or

additional effects beyond those already assessed in the 2017 assessment and would comply with the aims and objectives set out within the national and local planning policy framework from a landscape and visual perspective.

## 5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1. ES Landscape Planning Ltd was instructed by Pye Homes Ltd to review the potential landscape and visual effects arising from a revised layout in relation to their site at Larsen Road, Upper Heyford.
- 5.2. The purpose of this addendum is to introduce the revised scheme and assess whether the 2021 layout would give rise to any landscape and / or visual effects beyond those identified within the 2017 Anthony Stiff Associates Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (ASA LVIA).
- 5.3. The site lies immediately to the east of the former Upper Heyford Air Base, approximately 5km to the north west of Bicester. The site currently comprises approximately 3.2ha of improved grassland which lies to the east of the former officer's housing. Camp Road defines the southern extent of the site, with a mobile home site located on the southern side of the road corridor. A localised watercourse defines the eastern boundary, separating the site from a larger arable field which lies to the west of Chilgrove Drive. Letchmere Farm and several paddocks lie to the north of the site and separate it from the former runway and associated buildings which are now used for a variety of commercial enterprises. The localised context of the site has not materially changed since the 2017 ASA LVIA.
- 5.4. The site is not subject to any qualitative landscape designations.
- 5.5. The proposed layout has been revisited and tested from a landscape, highways, ecology and housing supply perspective. It is considered that the site could deliver up to 89 units, which is 12 more than the 2017 submitted layout. The revised layout would:
  - Maintain a green corridor along the eastern boundary for habitat creation and informal recreation;
  - Achieve an appropriate offset from the western boundary to ensure that a new, native boundary hedge could be established along this edge, softening the perception of the proposals;
  - Ensure that a LAP and a LEAP can be integrated into the development in accordance with CDC's requirements, taking account of the necessary buffers from the nearest habitable rooms;
  - Ensure that a network of useable green spaces are incorporated through the development, to break up the proposed built environment and provide informal recreation opportunities;

- Provide space for internal landscape treatment, including street trees and appropriate native boundary planting.

- 5.6. In terms of the effect of the revised layout upon the landscape character of the site and its setting, it is considered that the revised scheme would not give rise to any greater effects upon the receiving landscape character than those identified within the 2017 ASA LVIA. It is acknowledged that the revised scheme would change the interface between the site and Camp Road immediately adjacent to the site. However, the perception of this change would be highly localised and seen within the context of the settlement edge to the south of the streetscene, characterised by the caravan park, which extends Heyford Park up to the localised watercourse which also forms the eastern boundary of the site. The site and its localised setting are characterised by the existing air base and the proposals present the opportunity to introduce a high quality residential development, that contributes to housing provision within Cherwell, and would create an appropriate transition between the higher density development of Heyford Park and the wider landscape to the east.
- 5.7. While it is acknowledged that the proposals would result in the loss of an area of species-poor grassland, this landcover is not considered rare or ecologically valuable, and any greenfield development, no matter the scale, would result in some perceived change. However, the National Planning Policy Framework does not protect green fields for their own sake. Furthermore, the site is located immediately adjacent to the settlement edge, forming part of the wider Upper Heyford masterplan. The proposed development would not affect the key characteristics of the wider “Farmland Plateau” landscape type, as identified by the OWLS assessment, and could be integrated into the localised landscape without giving rise to significant adverse effects.
- 5.8. In terms of the effect of the revised scheme upon the receiving visual environment, as identified within the 2017 ASA LVIA, there would be some moderate / major effects upon the visual environment at Year One. However, these are highly localised viewpoints, located immediately adjacent to the site and, as the proposed landscaping matures, the perceived effect would reduce and the proposals could be integrated without significant adverse effects. The perceived overall effect would reduce with distance from the site as intervening topography and vegetation cover break up views of the proposals. Views of the site are already highly localised as a result of the topography, built form, vegetation structure and limited public access that characterises the sites setting. Overall, it is considered that the revised scheme would not give rise to any greater effects than those identified within the 2017 assessment. It is concluded that the proposals can be integrated without significant adverse effects upon the receiving visual environment.

- 5.9. National and local policy seek to achieve high quality and sustainable development. It is considered that the revised proposals would comply with the aims and objectives set out within the national and local planning policy framework from a landscape and visual perspective.
- 5.10. It is considered that the revised layout does not give rise to any greater or additional adverse effects beyond those assessed in the 2017 ASA LVIA and it is the judgement of this LVIA Addendum that the proposals could be integrated in this location without long term adverse effects upon the receiving landscape character and visual environment.