



LAND NORTH OF CAMP ROAD, HEYFORD PARK, UPPER HEYFORD

Landscape and Visual Appraisal Addendum

by

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for

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1 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this addendum is to outline any Landscape or Visual implications following the conversion of two permitted schemes into one over-arching proposal and to ensure that the significance of the effects reported on previously submitted LVAs remains valid. The current proposals are for a 126-unit housing scheme with associated open space and infrastructure. For the purposes of this assessment the 'site' refers to the land within the application boundary.

1.2 The following information has been referred to

- Landscape & Visual Appraisal (October 2021 - 10215L.LVA.002) referred to in this report as **LVA A** – included at **Appendix A**
- Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment – Addendum (September 2021 - 9712L.LVIA_ADD.003) referred to in this report as **LVA B** – Included at **Appendix B**
- Heyford Masterplan – Design and Access Statement (April 2018 – ref: P16-0631_81D)

1.3 LVIA A relates to the northern portion of the site with plans approved for 31 units (Planning ref: 21/03523/OUT). The LVA concluded that views towards the site are highly localized as a result from the built form associated with the airbase, limited public access and good vegetation coverage around the site. It was considered that the 31 dwellings could integrate into the location without adverse effects upon character and visual amenity and that the proposal reflected an opportunity to introduce a high-quality development into the wider Heyford Park Masterplan.

1.4 The committee report corresponding to application 21/03523/OUT stated that:
'Overall, the impact of the development on the landscape character area is considered moderate. There would be visual impacts associated with the development and with the more significant visual impacts of the development particularly from the north and east however these can be mitigated to some extent through additional planting and screening to the boundaries. The site is at one of the less sensitive entrances to the village to change and is relatively well contained by existing features. This harm needs to be weighed in the planning balance when considering the development as a whole.'
Planning permission was granted.

1.5 LVA B relates to the southern portion of the site with plans for 89 units (Planning ref: 15/01357/F). The LVA concluded that the proposals can be integrated into the surroundings without significant residual landscape or visual effects. The 2021 report is, in itself, an addendum of a previous LVA for the same site. Within the 2021 report (LVA B) it states that: *"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". Planning permission was again granted for this scheme.

1.5 The supporting photographs accompanying both LVA A & LVA B were taken in March 2019 and represent winter views. They remain a good representation of the views currently experienced towards the site. For completeness an updated photographic record was produced, following a site visit on 16th September 2022. The updated photographs are provided at Appendix D.

2 Policy Context

2.1 The policy context in which LVA A and LVA B were carried out, remains up-to-date and therefore any conclusions drawn from it remain applicable. An additional Policy consideration, not recorded within the previous LVA's includes Policy ESD17 of the adopted Local Plan, which states that green infrastructure networks should be integral to the planning of new development, maximising green infrastructure links to form a multi-functional network of open space, providing opportunities for walking and cycling, and connecting the towns to the urban fringe and the wider countryside beyond.

2.2 LVA B incorrectly references a revised paragraph within the NPPF (see para 2.2.1 of LVA), which states: "*The NPPF has also been revised with the aims and objectives previously covered by para 109, now covered by para 170*". It is noted that the relevant landscape paragraph for consideration is 174.

3 Assessment Methodology and Scope

3.1 The requirements for LVA assessment and associated relevant technical guidance have not been updated since the submission of LVA's A & B in autumn 2021. It is therefore considered unlikely that the context of the submitted 2021 LVA methodologies would change, to such an extent that would affect the assessed outcome of either assessment. It is noted that HDA's LVA Methodology is different to those of the previously submitted LVA's, but that it follows the same technical guidance.

4 Comparison between existing LVA's

4.1 Both submitted 2021 LVAs arrived at similar conclusions for the following areas:

- That the site is not subject to any landscape designations, which remains correct.
- That the loss of species poor grassland is not considered to affect the ecological value of the site, or the character of the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS) farmland plateau landscape type.

- The site could therefore be integrated into the landscape without adverse effects upon landscape character. This is in line with HDA’s findings (considered later within this report) and remains relevant.
- That the visual envelope for the site is localised and predominantly associated with the interface with Camp Road (with particular reference to public views). This remains the case.
- There adverse visual effects have been recorded for people experiencing views of the proposed development at year one. As the landscape matures the effects on visual amenity will reduce, which is in line with HDA’s findings and remains relevant.
- That the development would comply with the national and local policy to achieve a high quality and sustainable development. This is consider later within this report in more detail.

4.2 The reports differ in the following ways:

- Each report corresponds to a different parcel of land. However, the parcels of land abut each other to the north and the south.
- LVA A goes into further detail regarding landscape character assessment. The report references the National Character Areas prepared by Natural England, as well as Landscape Character Assessment produced in-house at ESLP.

5 **Baseline Information**

5.1 HDA carried out a field assessment of the site in September 2022. During the visit, the trees and hedges where in full leaf, representing the equivalent of summer views. The 2021 LVA supporting photographs provided winter views with trees and hedges not yet in leaf and thus representing a worst-case scenario. It is considered that the baseline situation within the 2021 reporting and the up-to-date site visit are generally consistent in their findings. Incremental changes include the growth of hedges associated with Camp Road and Trenchard Circle, which were uncut at the time of the 2022 survey. As a result, they have increased in height and depth since the 2021 photographic record, which has increased the screening of the site slightly in views from the west.

Landscape baseline and sensitivity

5.2 The published Landscape Character context referenced within LVA A and LVA B remains current and the additional site-specific detail provided within LVA A (see bullet 2, para 4 above) remains an accurate description of the site and local character.

- 5.3 The site is the only landscape receptor for which considerations of landscape sensitivity have been provided, although value and susceptibility judgements for the site are thorough and well reasoned. LVAs A & B Concluded that the Landscape sensitivity of the site *'is Medium – Low with the ability to accommodate some change arising from a sensitively designed layout'* (para 2.3.18 of LVA A and para 2.3.4 of LVA B). HDA concur with the sensitivity findings for the site.
- 5.4 In addition to the site, HDA have considered the sensitivity of the character of the wider rural landscape to the east, and the landscape settlement setting to RAF Upper Heyford. The wider rural landscape encompasses more of the 'Farmland Plateau' landscape type (LT) and 'Fritwell' landscape character area (LCA - derived from the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study) and contains more of the key characteristic of the LT and LCA respectively. Furthermore, the rural landscape to the east has less of an urban influence from the existing settlement at RAF Upper Heyford. The rural landscape to the east of the site is considered to have a Medium sensitivity to the proposed changes within the site.
- 5.5 The eastern extent of RAF Upper Heyford lies within a Conservation Area, however the nature of the build form is representative of the Cold War and is relatively modern in style. The baseline context is therefore that of suburban housing. The existing outgrown hedgerow beyond the western boundary of the site, provides a relatively strong landscape structure, which limits the sites contribution to the landscape setting of the settlement. In conclusion it is considered that the site has a Medium – Low sensitivity to change, with landscape value judged to be medium and the susceptibility to change considered to be Low.

Visual baseline and sensitivity

- 5.6 HDA's baseline findings and field work corroborate the visual envelope and choice of visual receptors (with a total of 14 representative viewpoints) as set out within the 2021 LVAs. The reports included a range of public and private viewpoint locations (See Appendix D for further details).
- 5.7 In March 2019, The Landscape Institute published technical guidance on Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA). Residential visual amenity is defined within the document as:
'The overall quality, experience and nature of views and outlook available to occupants of residential properties, including views from gardens and domestic curtilage. It represents the visual component of Residential Amenity.'
- 5.8 Paragraphs 1.5 and 1.6 of the RVAA document state that:

1.5 Changes in views and visual amenity are considered in the planning process. In respect of private views and visual amenity, it is widely known that, no one has 'a right to a view.' This includes situations where a residential property's outlook / visual amenity is judged to be 'significantly' affected by a proposed development, a matter which has been confirmed in a number of appeal / public inquiry decisions.

1.6 It is not uncommon for significant adverse effects on views and visual amenity to be experienced by people at their place of residence as a result of introducing a new development into the landscape. In itself this does not necessarily cause particular planning concern. However, there are situations where the effect on the outlook / visual amenity of a residential property is so great that it is not generally considered to be in the public interest to permit such conditions to occur where they did not exist before.'

5.9 A summary of the 2021 findings, with respect to sensitivity are included at Table 1 below. These have been organised to follow the panorama numbering provided within the HDA Site Photographs. For clarity the result N/A has been included where one of the 2021 LVAs did not assess a particular viewpoint location.

Table 1: Visual receptor sensitivity

Location	Viewpoint Reference			Key Receptors	Sensitivity	
	HDA	LVA A	LVA B		LVA A	LVA B
Larsen Road, next to the former Officer's Quarters Houses. (Not a public viewpoint)	1	2	1	Residents	Medium - High	Medium - High
Southern side of Camp Road, directly south of the site looking down Larsen Road	2	3	2	Residents and motorists	Medium - High	Medium - High
Drive to Letchmere Farm, within the site, looking south (not a public viewpoint)	3	3	N/A	Residents	Medium - High	N/A
Drive to Letchmere Farm, within the site, looking south (not a public viewpoint)	4	1	11	Residents	Medium - High	Medium - High
Southern side of Camp Road	5	4	4	Motorists	Low	Low
Bridleway 388/7/10, 220m to the southeast of the site	6	12	10	Walkers and riders	Medium - High	Medium - High
Camp Road, approximately 160m to the east of the site	7	5	5	Motorists	Low	Low
Camp Road, at the junction with the B430, approximately 230m to the east of the site	8	6	6	Motorists	Low	Low
B430 approximately 485m to the east of the site	9	8	7	Motorists	Low	Low

Bridleway 109/28/10, approximately 530m to the east of the site	10	9	8	Walkers and riders	Medium - High	Medium - High
Bridleway 109/28/10, approximately 665m to the east of the site	11	10	12	Walkers and riders	Medium - High	Medium - High
Bridleway 109/28/10, approximately 840m to the east of the site	12	11	13	Walkers and riders	Medium - High	Medium - High
Northern end of Chilgrove Drive, North east of the site	13	N/A	9	Residents	N/A	Low
Chilgrove Drive, to the east of the site	14	7	N/A	Residents	Low	N/A

5.10 Where the two prior LVAs used the same viewpoints, the assessed sensitivity was consistent. The sensitivities provided above continue to be reasonable and proportionate.

6 Consideration of Scheme Changes

6.1 The key change proposed to the design is the combination of the two prior development sites and addition of 6 units to the overall scheme. There are further minor changes to the internal layout as represented on the Illustrative Landscape Layout (see Appendix C). The new units are spread across the site and replace areas of incidental open space and the LAP associated with 31 dwelling scheme to the north of the site (LVA A). The eastern boundary remains broadly comparable, and the central open space has slightly increased in area. The redesign of the landscape scheme offers a more efficient approach with a consolidated play provision and multifunctional central green space, which is intended to offset the reduction in incidental open space.

6.2 The proposed landscape scheme (2022) also retains the screening elements for the development including native tree, shrub and hedgerow planting to the east and a mixed native boundary hedge to the west.

6.3 The frontage hedgerow at Camp Road is proposed for removal in order to create new vehicular access points, however large sections would be replaced with new hedgerow and tree planting, which would maintain the existing green frontage to the road.

7 Assessment

Predicted Effects on Landscape Character

7.1 LVA A & LVA B came to the same conclusion that each respective parcel of development would represent a **Medium – Low** magnitude of change to the character of the site, within the context of the wider landscape. When taking sensitivity into consideration the development was assessed as having a **Moderate – Minor** adverse significance upon the landscape at year 1, reducing to less than Minor adverse effects by year 10.

7.2 The proposed development for this site includes both sites assessed previously. The site itself would change in character from a field in pasture to a housing development with

associated open space. In addition, one of the existing landscape features, the frontage hedgerow, would be removed in order to facilitate the proposed access points and associated visibility splays. At construction, the change is considered to represent a High magnitude of change. Following completion, the proposals would begin to blend with the existing adjacent settlement edge. The effects are considered to be short term, but **Moderate** and adverse within the site.

7.3 It is noted that this judgement reflects the methodology of HDA and is a reflection of the judgement within the committee report corresponding to application 21/03523/OUT. It is likely that the same Moderate adverse judgement would have been reached by HDA for both previous LVAs at construction.

7.4 Following the establishment of the proposed landscape mitigation, the development would soften, representing the new edge to settlement. The predicted landscape effects on the character of the site would reduce. Both previous schemes relating to the site were permitted and it is considered that the landscape effects of the current proposals would not represent a change over an above that already accepted for the development of the previous schemes.

7.5 It is considered that the landscape effects on receptors outside the site, including the wider landscape to the east; and the landscape setting to RAF Upper Heyford to the west, would be limited, due to the enclosure of the site and the consistency with the existing settlement pattern. This is consistent with the findings of the 2021 LVA's.

Predicted Effects on Visual Amenity

7.6 The site includes both previously assessed schemes and therefore is likely to represent the worst-case visual effect submitted in relation to either of the prior LVA's for each report. In contrast, the photographic record for this report was produced in September and represent a summer view, whereas the photographic evidence provided in support of the 2021 LVAs represented winter views.

7.7 A summary of the 2021 findings, with respect to effects on visual amenity are included at Table 2 below. These have been organised to follow the panorama numbering provided within the HDA Site Photographs For clarity the result N/A has been included where one of the 2021 LVAs did not assess a particular viewpoint location.

Table 2: Predicted effects on Visual Amenity

Location	Viewpoint Reference			Effects at construction / completion		Effects following 10 years of operation	
	HDA	LVA A	LVA B	LVA A	LVA B	LVA A	LVA B
Larsen Road, next to the former Officer's Quarters Houses. (Not a public viewpoint)	1	2	1	Moderate / Minor	Moderate	Minor	Moderate/Minor
Southern side of Camp Road, directly south of the site looking down Larsen Road	2	3	2	Moderate	Moderate / Major	Moderate/Minor	Moderate
Drive to Letchmere Farm, within the site, looking south (not a public viewpoint)	3	3	N/A	N/A	Moderate	N/A	Moderate/Minor
Drive to Letchmere Farm, within the site, looking south (not a public viewpoint)	4	1	11	Moderate / Major	Moderate / Major	Moderate	Moderate
Southern side of Camp Road	5	4	4	Moderate/Minor	Moderate	Minor	Moderate/Minor
Bridleway 388/7/10, 220m to the southeast of the site	6	12	10	Moderate/Minor	Moderate/Minor	Minor	Minor
Camp Road, approximately 160m to the east of the site	7	5	5	Negligible	Moderate/Minor	Negligible	Minor
Camp Road, at the junction with the B430, approximately 230m to the east of the site	8	6	6	Moderate/Minor	Moderate/Minor	Minor	Minor
B430 approximately 485m to the east of the site	9	8	7	Negligible	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
Bridleway 109/28/10, approximately 530m to the east of the site	10	9	8	Moderate/Minor	Moderate/Minor	Minor	Minor
Bridleway 109/28/10, approximately 665m to the east of the site	11	10	12	No view	No view	No view	No view
Bridleway 109/28/10, approximately 840m to the east of the site	12	11	13	Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
Northern end of Chilgrove Drive, North east of the site	13	N/A	9	N/A	Moderate/Minor	N/A	Minor
Chilgrove Drive, to the east of the site	14	7	N/A	Minor	N/A	Negligible	N/A

7.8 The 2021 LVA's are generally consistent in their findings, however there are minor variations within the conclusions drawn from some viewpoint locations, primarily due to the parcel of land being assessed. The site assessed through LVA A was further north, further from key visual receptors and was smaller in terms of the proposed development, so generally has a more favourable assessment.

- 7.9 This assessment considers a combination of both sites. Judgements to which the findings are agreed are identified in green, with disputed judgements in yellow. For viewpoints 1,2,5,7 and 9, the chosen judgement reflects the larger extent of the site and is therefore the most applicable to the analysis of the combined site.
- 7.10 Judgements for 13 and 14 represent the same receptor group, but with representative viewpoints taken at slightly different locations. It is considered that the judgements provided for 13 are more reflective of those perceived with respect to the combined site.
- 7.11 There are no occasions where the judgements for the previous LVAs are considered to be inaccurate or incorrect – or where the revised proposals would cause effects on visual amenity that are considered to be in excess of those already recorded.

8 Conclusions

- 8.1 The baseline conditions of the site and surrounding area remain consistent with those set out within the 2021 LVAs. The character of the farmland Plateau has matured as vegetation has been allowed to grow without maintenance but not to a degree that would affect the baseline assessment of landscape sensitivity.
- 8.2 The proposed development combines the prior two red line boundary and land use of the submitted schemes. The combined design increases the dwellings by 6 and reduces public open space, however the overall effect of the changes on the scale and character of the development are considered to be relatively slight and would not be of sufficient magnitude to change the outcome of this report, such that is considered different in conclusion to the 2021 LVAs.
- 8.3 There remains some discrepancy with regard to judgement of landscape effects, however these are reflective of different in interpretations of similar schemes, rather than an acknowledged increase in effect caused by detrimental changes to the proposed development. In terms of effects upon the wider landscape character and local visual amenity it is considered that the revised scheme would not give rise to any greater effects than those presented by either LVA A or LVA B with respect to the different sites. Therefore, their findings and conclusions remain valid. It is considered that the proposed development could be successfully integrated into the site without any notable long-term adverse effects upon the receiving landscape character or visual amenity.
- 8.4 It is noted that a planning application (reference 21/04289/OUT) has been submitted with regards to the site to the west of the proposed site. If approved, this would further urbanise

the existing character of the site and would screen existing views of the site from the east and south-east (HDA viewpoints 7,8,9,10,11,12,13 & 14).