

POTENTIAL EFFECTS

The text below provides an analysis of the potential direct/ indirect impacts based on site reconnaissance to make a professional judgement on the magnitude and evaluation of effects of the main landscape and visual receptors identified in the study area as outlined in the Baseline Conditions.

Assessment of Landscape Effects

Magnitude of Landscape Effects - The effect on landscape character as a result of the proposed Development is largely dependent on; the characteristics of the receiving landscape, the consistency of the proposed development in relation to the receiving landscape and the perceptions of the proposed development influenced by distance, weather and appearance.

Landscape effects are classified as substantial, moderate, slight, negligible and none based on a professional judgement which combines landscape sensitivity, value, susceptibility to change and the level of interaction with the proposed Development.

The criteria utilised in ascribing magnitude of change of landscape effects throughout this assessment are as follows:

- **Very High:** Total loss or considerable alteration to key elements/ features/characteristics of the view that is directly visible resulting in a substantial change to the baseline condition;
- **High:** Notable loss/alteration/addition to one or more key receptors/-characteristics of the baseline; or addition of prominent conflicting elements
- **Medium:** Partial loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the view. Change perceived as a partial or localised change within a broader, unaltered context which may be noticed directly or obliquely;
- **Low:** Limited loss or small alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the view. Change is discernible but underlying composition of the view would be similar to baseline;
- **Negligible:** Barely discernible loss or alteration to key components; addition of elements not uncharacteristic within the existing landscape
- **Indiscernible:** In some circumstances, changes to key landscape components will be lower than negligible and changes will be described as 'Imperceptible'. This will lead to an imperceptible effect i.e., less than negligible.

Landscape effects also consider whether the Development:

- Reinforces the landscape elements, structure and key landscape characteristics (positive). Or would it include low or negligible changes that maybe considered part of the baseline condition (neutral). Or an adverse effect which may include the loss of landscape elements such as mature trees and hedgerows as part of construction leading to a reduction in the landscape quality and character of an area.
- Would have a physical change to landscape fabric (direct) or consequential change (indirect).
- Results in short term (up to 5 years), medium term (up to 25 years) or long-term changes (25+ years).
- Would have reversible or irreversible effects on the landscape.



Assessment of Effects on Visual Amenity

Magnitude of the Visual Effects - The magnitude of change arising from the proposed development at any particular viewpoint is described as substantial, moderate, slight or negligible based on the interpretation of a combination of largely quantifiable parameters, as follows:

- Distance of the viewpoint from the development;
- Duration of the predicted impact;
- Extent of the development in the view, e.g. the horizontal angle subtended by the development;
- Angle of view in relation to main receptor activity;
- Degree of contrast;
- Visual permeability of proposed Development, i.e. extent to which views would be blocked or would be restricted;
- Background to the Development; and
- Extent and nature of other built development visible.

In the case of magnitude of change occurring within designated areas or along roads or recreational routes, the proportion of the designated area or length of the route affected by the proposals is also a consideration.

The criteria utilised in ascribing visual magnitude of change throughout this assessment are as follows:

- **Very High:** Substantial change to the baseline, forming a new, defining focus and having a defining influence on the view
- **High:** Additions are clearly noticeable and part of the view would be fundamentally altered.
- **Medium:** Moderate alteration to one or more key characteristics of the baseline view.
- **Low :** Proposed development will form a minor constituent of the view being partially visible or at sufficient distance to be a small component.
- **Negligible:** Barely discernible loss or alteration to key components; addition of elements not uncharacteristic within the existing landscape.
- **Indiscernible:** In some circumstances, changes at representative viewpoints will be lower than negligible and changes to the existing baseline of the view will be described as 'Imperceptible'. This will lead to an imperceptible effect i.e., less than negligible.

Visual effects also consider whether the Development:

- Results in short term (up to 5 years), medium term (up to 25 years) or long-term changes (25+ years).
- Would have reversible or irreversible effects on the visual amenity.



EVALUATING LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

Landscape or visual effects have been assessed as major, major/moderate, moderate, moderate/minor, minor or minor/negligible. These categories have been based on combining viewpoint sensitivity and predicted magnitude of change (Table A.2).

Table A.2: Evaluation of Landscape and Visual Effects

	MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE				
Receptor Sensitivity	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Very High	Substantial	Major	Major/-moderate	Moderate	Moderate/-minor
High	Major	Major/-moderate	Moderate	Moderate/-minor	Minor
Medium	Major/-moderate	Moderate	Moderate/-minor	Minor	Minor/-negligible
Low	Moderate	Moderate/-minor	Minor	Minor/-negligible	Negligible
Negligible	Moderate/-minor	Minor	Minor/-negligible	Negligible	Negligible/-none
Indiscernible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible

The matrix is not used as a prescriptive tool, and the methodology and analysis of potential effects at any particular location must allow for the exercise of professional judgement. Thus in some instances a particular parameter may be considered as having a determining effect on the analysis.



