7.4

## APPENDIX 7.4 – Noise Mapping Assumptions

7.1 This appendix provides the assumptions made for the noise maps presented in the main report of the EIA and Appendix 7.3 – Site Suitability Assessment.

7.2 Due to ongoing engineering works in the Bicester Chord rail link development, noise surveys were not able to take place. Instead, a noise model has been adopted using Sound Plan – Manager 7.3 (64 Bit) updated on 15/11/2013, licensed for Arup Acoustics.

7.3 The measurement carried out by Environmental Resources Management (ERM) at the site, are used to calibrate the noise map as it is explained below.

### Road Noise Model

7.4 Measurements carried out at location NML-ES1 determined the noise climate due to road noise from Gavray Drive road exclusively ,as train noise was not recorded (no SELs). This measurements are therefore used to calibrate the CRTN calculation.

7.5 In addition to the measurement, road traffic data was also provided to run the model. Details can be found in Appendix 7.2 – Road Traffic Flow.

7.6 Figure 1 and Figure 2 show the noise map during daytime and night time respectively at a 1.5m height above ground. The level comparison of noise mapping and measurement is shown in Table 1.

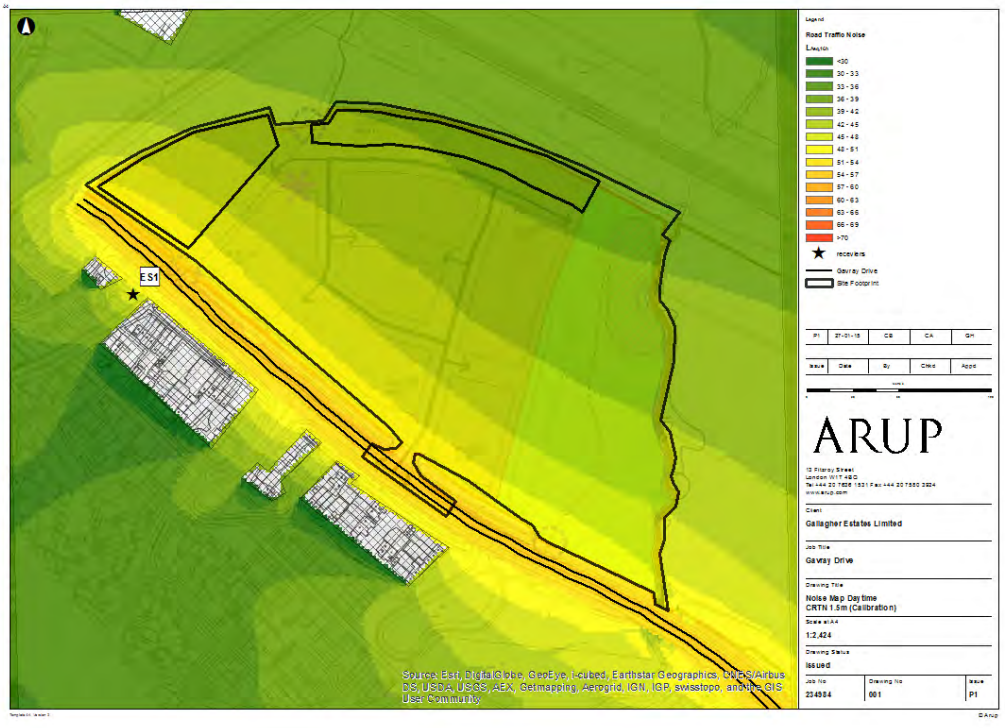


**Figure 1 Road Traffic Noise map during daytime**

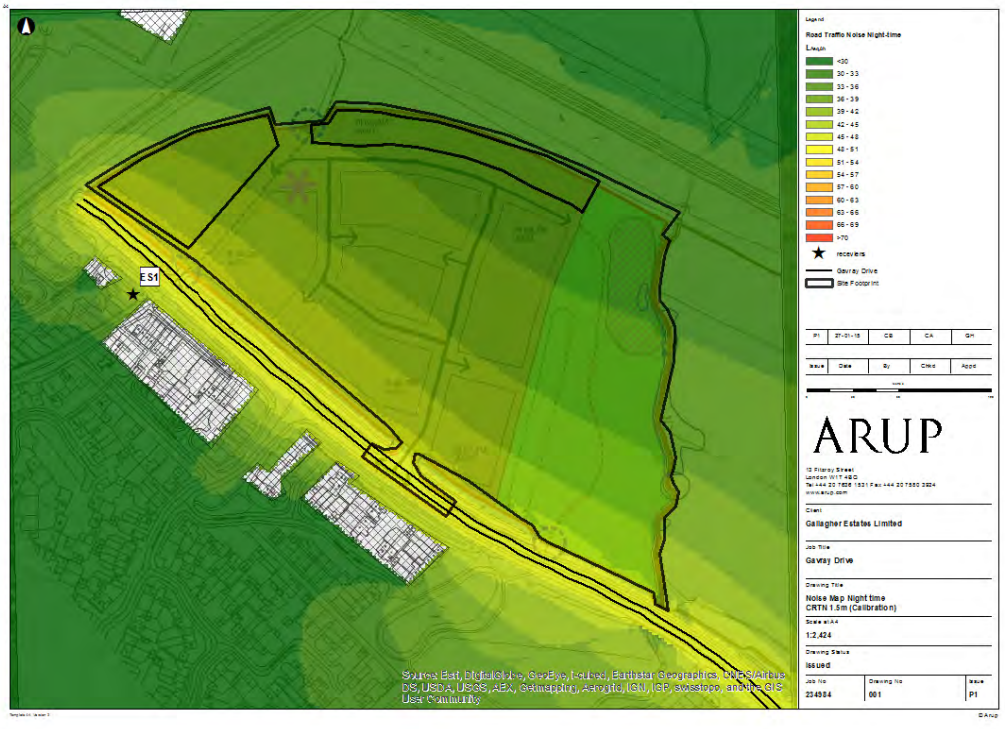


**Figure 2 Road Traffic Noise map during night time**

**Table 1 Level comparison of measurements and noise mapping**

| Measurement Location | Measurement by ERM | Noise Mapping |
|---|---|---|
| **NML (ES) 1 – Gavray Drive daytime (1.5m)** | 47.5 $dBL_{Aeq,16h}$ | 45-48 $dBL_{Aeq,16h}$ contour |
| **NML (ES) 1 – Gavray Drive night time (1.5m)** | 41 $dBL_{Aeq,8h}$ | 39–42d $BL_{Aeq,8h}$ contour |

7.7 Topographical data of the site including approximate elevation of railway embankments was provided by Gallagher UK, and ground absorption was set to 'soft' where there was grass and 'hard' where there was pavement.

7.8 As shown in Table 1 the levels of the noise map agree well with the measurements taken by ERM.

**Rail Noise Model**

7.9 It is important to point out that the calibration of the noise maps to a measurement location is done only for road noise as the Bicester Chord rail link is not yet finished.

7.10 The Scheme of Assessment for Route Section A provides the rail noise levels at location NML-ES1 during daytime and night time. The levels at 25m from source can be calculated with Calculation of Rail Noise (CRN).

**Table 2 Results of the ERM Noise modelling without mitigation (free field)**

| Measurement Location | Predicted Train Noise by ERM* | Distance to source | Source Level |
|---|---|---|---|
| **NML (ES) 1 – Gavray Drive daytime** | 47.5 $dBL_{Aeq,16h}$ | 50m | 63 $dBL_{Aeq,16h}$ |
| **NML (ES) 1 – Gavray Drive night time** | 41 $dBL_{Aeq,8h}$ | 50m | 61 $dBL_{Aeq,8h}$ |

**No mitigation scenario used to reduce uncertainty*

7.11 This levels are therefore used as the source level of the Bicester Chord railway line.

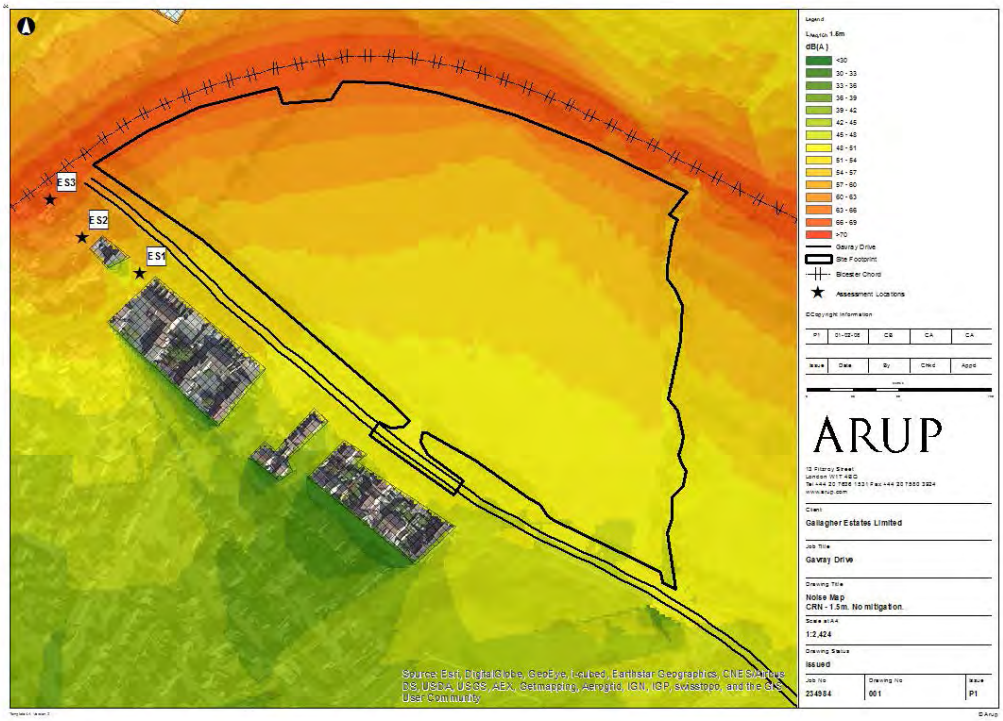


**Figure 3 Train Noise map during daytime. _Nigh time noise map is approximately only 2dB lower than daytime._**

### Mixed Sources Model

7.12 Once both sources of noise are evaluated, an energetic addition is performed to plot the effect of both sources across the site. See Figures 4 and 5 below.

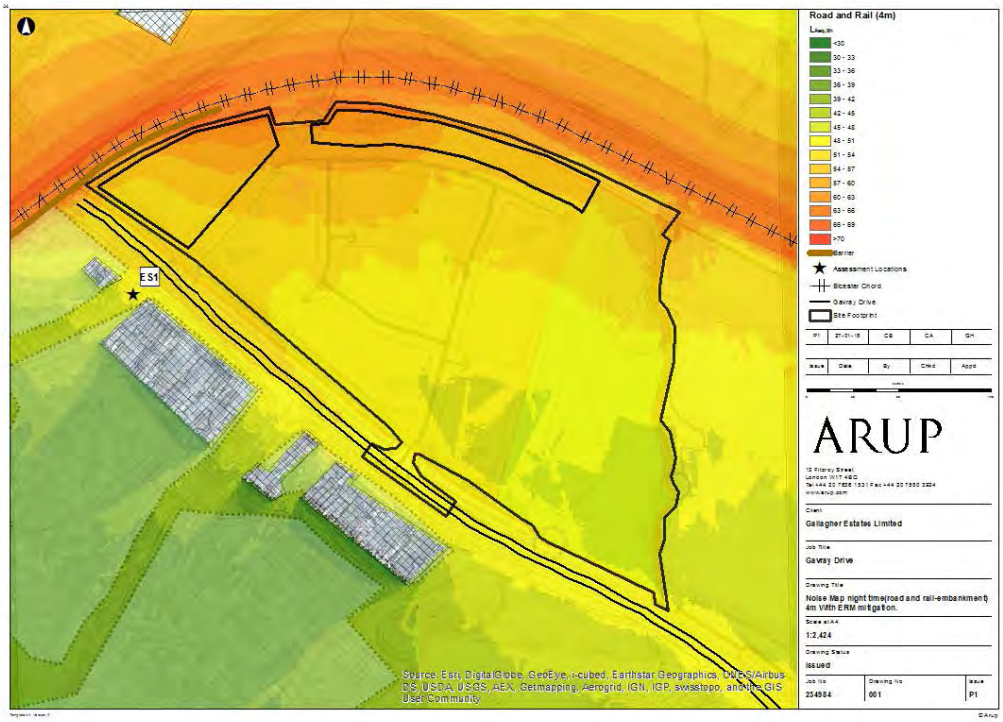


**Figure 4 Mixed Sources noise map during daytime**

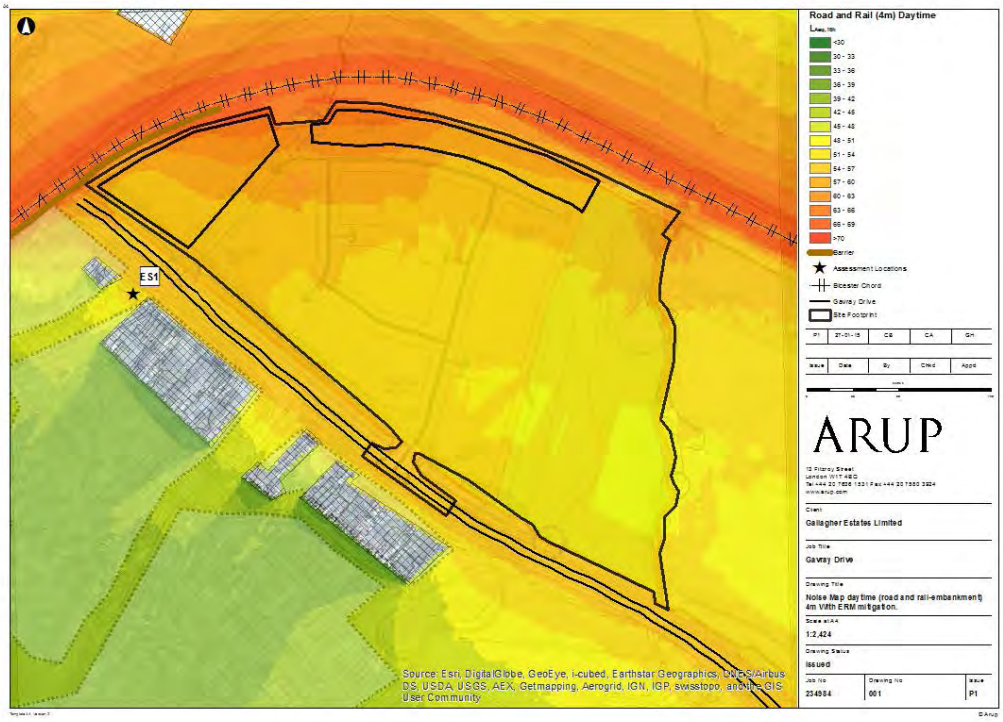


**Figure 5 Mixed Sources noise map during night time**

**APPENDIX 7.5 – Assessment methodologies- Compliance with Government Noise Policy**

**5.1** The proposed assessment approach reflects the requirements of the Government's noise policy as defined in Defra's Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE)[1].

**National Planning Policy**

**5.2** The NPSE noise policy states 'Through the effective management and control of environmental, neighbour and neighbourhood noise within the context of Government policy on sustainable development:

- avoid significant adverse health impacts on health and quality of life;
- mitigate and minimise adverse impacts on health and quality of life; and
- where possible, contribute to the improvement of health and quality of life.'

**5.3** Within these aims, the NPSE uses the key phrases 'significant adverse' and 'adverse'. In clarifying what these mean the NPSE notes that: '…there are two established concepts from toxicology that are currently being applied to noise effects, for example, by the WHO (World Health Organization)'. They are:

- **NOEL** – No Observed Effect Level
  This is the level below which no effect can be detected. In simple terms, below this level, there is no detectable effect on health and quality of life due to the noise.
- **LOAEL** – Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level
  This is the level above which adverse effects on health and quality of life can be detected.

**5.4** The Policy extends these concepts to include:

- **SOAEL** – Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level
  This is the level above which significant adverse health effects on health and quality of life occur.

**5.5** These terms are adopted in the Government's Noise Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)2, which presents example outcomes to help characterise these effects. In general terms an observed adverse effect, ie above the LOAEL threshold is characterised in the NPPG as:

- **LOAEL** perceived as 'noticeable and intrusive'

**5.6** - example outcome: *'Noise can be heard and causes small changes in behaviour and/or attitude, e.g. turning up volume of television; speaking more loudly; where there is no alternative ventilation, having to close windows for some of the time because of the noise. Potential for some reported sleep disturbance. Affects the acoustic character of*

[1] Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2010), Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE)

[2] DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (2012) National Planning Practice Guidance – Noise, http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/noise/noise-guidance/ (Revision date: 06 03 2014)

*the area such that there is a perceived change in the quality of life.'* NPSE required action – 'Mitigate and reduce to a minimum'

**5.7** The NPPG characterises SOAEL as**:**

- **SOAEL** perceived as 'noticeable and disruptive'

**5.8** - example outcome: '*The noise causes a material change in behaviour and/or attitude, e.g. avoiding certain activities during periods of intrusion; where there is no alternative ventilation, having to keep windows closed most of the time because of the noise. Potential for sleep disturbance resulting in difficulty in getting to sleep, premature awakening and difficulty in getting back to sleep. Quality of life diminished due to change in acoustic character of the area.'* NPSE required action – 'Avoid'

**5.9** The noise policy notes that triggers should be defined for the onset of adverse effects (LOAELs) and significant adverse effects (SOAELs) in terms of total levels of exposure. Also, that these trigger values should reflect the nature of the noise source, the sensitivity of the receptor and local context.

**5.10** The NPSE notes that it is not possible to have a single objective noise-based measure that defines SOAEL that is applicable to all sources of noise in all situations. Consequently, the SOAEL is likely to be different for different noise sources, for different receptors and at different times. It is for a project to identify relevant SOAEL taking account the different sources of exposure and different receptors.

**5.11** Thresholds for potential adverse and significant adverse noise and vibration effect thresholds are defined for the proposed scheme in the following sections, based on:

**5.12** the National Government Policy described above; guidance from other British Standards referred to in this Appendix in particular BS 5228[3] (for construction); and best practice.

**Construction noise – adverse effect thresholds**

**5.13** When assessing construction noise, the guidance in BS 5228-1 identifies a number of key factors in relation to the effects of noise (and vibration) to people living and working around the site. The duration of the noise exposure is an important factor as well as the actual noise level in rating significance.

**5.14** For the purpose of meeting the requirements of the NPSE, potential adverse effect thresholds have been established by reference to the ABC Method described in BS5228-1. To quantify these thresholds, Table F2.1 proposes construction noise levels, based on the ABC method, in the context of the guidance on observable adverse effects.

**5.15** Table F.2.1: Thresholds of potential effects of construction noise (residential)

| Effect threshold (residential) | Threshold value (façade) |
|---|---|

[3] BRITISH STANDARDS INSTITUTION (2009); BS 5228-1:2009+A1:2014 and BS 5228 Part 2 Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Open Construction Sites

| | |
|---|---|
| NOAEL | Day <65dBL$_{Aeq,\ daytime}$ |
| | Evening <55dBL$_{Aeq,\ 1hr}$ |
| | Night <45 dBL$_{Aeq,\ 1hr}$ |
| LOAEL | Day 65dBL$_{Aeq,\ daytime}$ |
| | Evening 55dBL$_{Aeq,\ 1hr}$ |
| | Night 45 dBL$_{Aeq,\ 1hr}$ |
| SOAEL | Day 75dBL$_{Aeq,\ daytime}$ |
| | Evening 65dBL$_{Aeq,\ 1hr}$ |
| | Night 55dBL$_{Aeq,\ 1hr}$ |

**5.16** Further to NPSE requirements, the Environmental Statement also examines noise change, not just absolute level. In government policy terms, these are observed adverse effects but they are not significant observed adverse effects. These adverse effects (below the SOAEL) relate to people's response to changes in local acoustic character particularly outdoors and to a lesser extent indoors. Noise attenuation cannot change outdoor noise levels, and hence minimising adverse effects is centred on maximising on-site mitigation.

**Operational traffic noise – adverse effect thresholds**

**5.17** Table F2.2 describes the assessment criteria in relation to government policy for new or altered highways, the basis for which is set out in the following paragraphs.

**5.18** Table F2.2: Thresholds of Potential Effects of Operational Noise (Residential)

| Effect threshold (residential) | Threshold value |
|---|---|
| NOAEL | Day <50dBL$_{Aeq,16hr}$ (equivalent to <52dBL$_{A10,18hr}$)<br>Night <40dBL$_{Aeq,1hr\ (façade)}$ |
| LOAEL | Day 50dBL$_{Aeq,16hr}$ (equivalent to 52dBL$_{A10,18hr}$)<br>Night 40dBL$_{Aeq,1hr\ (façade)}$ |
| SOAEL | Day ≥ 68dBL$_{A10,18hr\ (façade)}$<br>Night >55dBL$_{Aeq,8hr\ (façade)}$ |

**5.19** In addition to considering the absolute levels to assess observed adverse effect levels in line with policy requirements, it is necessary also to consider the change in noise level, to assess potentially significant effects in accordance with DMRB Volume 11, Section 3, Part 7, HD 213/11 Revision 1[4], which provides guidance on the magnitude of changes in traffic noise. The ES assessment criteria associated with the change in noise level are set out in the Environmental Noise and Vibration Chapter (ie Section 9).

**5.20** With regard to the NPSE policy criteria, it should be noted that for existing highways, the ambient noise levels may well be above the thresholds given in Table F2.2.

[4] THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY, TRANSPORT SCOTLAND, WELSH ASSEMBLY, DRD (2011), Design Manual for Roads and Bridges Volume 11, Section 3, Part 7,HD 213/11 – Revision 1, TSO

Notwithstanding the guidance in DMRB in relation to noise change, for consistency with the approach to assessing absolute noise levels, if a receptor is already at or above SOAEL, then a change of +1dB will be considered potentially significant.

**5.21** During the daytime the level of 68dB$L_{A10,18hr}$ is considered a SOAEL. This is consistent with the daytime trigger level in the UK Noise Insulation Regulations[5]. In this respect it differs from the approach employed for the assessment of construction noise. This is on the basis that operational noise is permanent.

**5.22** The WHO Night Noise Guidelines for Europe[6] sets the Interim Target at 55dB$L_{Aeq,8hr}$ measured outdoors. This noise threshold has been taken to be a SOAEL (as described earlier). Again this criterion is based on the assessment of internal noise levels with windows assumed to be open.

**5.23** Sound levels of 50dBL$p_{Aeq,day}$ and 40dBL$p_{Aeq,night}$ from the new or altered highway are considered LOAEL and hence generally no effect on communities is likely. The LOAEL of 40dBL$p_{Aeq,night}$ is considered likely to be precautionary for road schemes.

**5.24** For the daytime level, the WHO Guidelines for Community Noise[7] identifies guideline values to assess typical community annoyance with 50 or 55dBL$p_{Aeq}$ [outdoor noise level], representing "daytime levels below which a majority of the adult population will be protected from becoming moderately or seriously annoyed, respectively." On this last matter, page 144 of the Community Noise guidelines states that "*Available data indicate that daytime sound pressure levels of less than 50dBLpAeq cause little or no serious annoyance in the community*". The dose response curves on page 100 of the same document suggest about 5% of the population is annoyed at 55 dB - i.e. the majority referred to in the annoyance guideline value is about 95% of the population.

**5.25** In the WHO's Night Noise Guidelines for Europe the night noise guideline, 40 dBL$p_{Aeq,2300-0700}$ outdoors, is set explicitly at the lowest observable adverse effect level (LOAEL). As stated earlier this level is considered likely to be precautionary for a road scheme.

**5.26** The thresholds of 50dBL$p_{Aeq,0700-2300}$ and 40dBL$p_{Aeq,2300-0700}$ therefore represent the onset of the lowest observed community noise effects during the day (annoyance) and night (risk of sleep disturbance ) consistent with guidance such as the World Health Organization Guidelines. No adverse effects are therefore generally likely below these absolute levels of sound exposure.

**5.27** Forecast operational sound levels from the Proposed Scheme of between 50 dB and 65 dB daytime, or 40 dB and 55 dB night-time (i.e. between the respective LOAELs and SOAELS) may be perceived as a change in quality of life for occupants of dwellings or a perceived change in the acoustic character of an area. When considered collectively for

[5]HMSO (1988), Noise Insulation (Amendment) Regulations, HMSO
[6] World Health Organisation (2009), Night Noise Guidelines for Europe, WHO
Bonn : WHO, regional Office for Europe, 2007
[7] WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION (1999), Guidelines for Community Noise, World Health Organization

groups of dwellings and their shared community open areas, such effects may be significant

# 08 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT

# Appendix 8.1:
# Baseline Conditions

## Establishing the Landscape and Visual Baseline

1.1 Landscape and visual assessment is comprised of a study of two separate but inter-linked issues:

- Landscape character is the physical make up and condition of the landscape itself, and arises from a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of physical and social elements, aesthetic factors and perceptual aspects; and

- Visual amenity is the way in which the site is *seen*; views to and from the site, their direction, character and sensitivity to change.

1.2 This section addresses baseline landscape character and visual amenity issues. The potential landscape and visual effects of the development of the site are considered within the accompanying schedule of effects Tables 8.1 – 8.3 (Appendix 8.1). This section also identifies those other landscape resource receptors such as are found within the study area.

1.3 The baseline conditions in respect of landscape character can be summarised from the study of published Landscape Character Assessments which are reviewed below, followed by a summary of EDP's own assessment of the character of the site itself. Published landscape character assessments have been undertaken from a sub-regional and district level; these are described in turn below.

## Study Areas

1.4 A broad search area of 5km has been selected for the general study area (see Figure 8.1, Appendix 8.2), which enables the geographical scope of the assessment to be defined and provides the wider geographical context of the study. This general study area also sets the scene and illustrates the broad topography and the distribution of landscape designations and woodland in relation to the Application site. Following field work and detailed analysis, a detailed study area of 2km has been selected (see Figure 8.2, Appendix 8.2) which represents the effective limits of potential significant effects arising from the introduction of the Proposed Development into the existing landscape and visual baseline setting.

**Landscape Character Review**

1.5 This report makes reference to three levels of published landscape character assessment. The regional-level assessment, which forms part of the national character assessment defining National Character Areas (previously known as Joint Character Areas), was originally undertaken by the former Countryside Agency and is now published by Natural England. At sub-regional and district levels there are two further assessments applicable to the Application site:

- At a sub-regional level - the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS), which was jointly sponsored by Oxfordshire County Council, Natural England and The Earth Trust, was a three-year National Demonstration Project started in April 2001, which made a link between landscape character and biodiversity to produce a strategic framework for decision-making. It is available as an online resource and represents the current landscape character assessment for the whole of Oxfordshire. The website version of this is copyright dated 2004. OWLS states that it should be used in conjunction with district landscape character assessments; and

- At a district level - The Cherwell District landscape Assessment was produced by Cobham Resource Associates for Cherwell District Council, and was published in November 1995.

1.6 Whilst the NCA covering the application site, within the framework of the national character assessment, is an important starting point in the consideration of landscape character, the OWLS project keys into the national framework by defining regional character areas that correspond with the NCAs (that fall within Oxfordshire), reflecting one of the principal purposes of the national character assessment as a framework for more localised study. For that reason, the NCA covering the site will be discussed only briefly, with greater emphasis placed on the relevant sub-regional character area(s) and landscape type(s) described in the OWLS project, with particular attention paid to the district-level assessment and EDP's own assessment of the site character and its local context.

***Regional Character Area - NCA***

1.7 At a regional level, the application site falls within National Character Area (NCA) 108 Upper Thames Clay Vales. The NCA 108 profile was updated and published in June 2014 and contains an up-to-date, more comprehensive, fact-based analysis of the landscape character of the area than the previous Natural England profile.

1.8 This large area, comprising the Wiltshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Vales, covers a broad belt of open, gently undulating lowland farmland, stretching from Aylesbury in the east to Swindon in the west, sandwiched between the chalk escarpment of the Wessex Downs-Chiltern Hills to the south and the dip slope of the Cotswolds to the north.

1.9 Broadly speaking, the NCA description paints a picture of the varied nature of the Upper Thames Clay Vales landscape. The profile notes valued landscape features, in particular those features with cultural and heritage associations; describes the changing landscape; and takes into account more recent trends. A number of key characteristics attributed to the NCA are listed at Profile page 6, and those of relevance to the locale of the application site, are included below:

- Low-lying clay-based flood plains encircle the Midvale Ridge. Superficial deposits, including alluvium and gravel terraces, spread over 40 per cent of the area, creating gently undulating topography. The Upper Jurassic and Cretaceous clays and the wet valley bottoms give rise to enclosed pasture, contrasting with the more settled, open, arable lands of the gravel.

- The large river system of the River Thames drains the Vales, their headwaters flowing off the Cotswolds to the north or emitting from the springline along the Chilterns and Downs escarpments;

- Woodland cover is low at only about 3 per cent, but hedges, hedgerow trees and field trees are frequent. Watercourses are often marked by lines of willows;

- Wet ground conditions and heavy clay soils discourage cultivation in many places, giving rise to livestock farming. Fields are [generally] regular and hedged;

- In the river corridors, grazed pasture dominates, with limited areas of historic wetland habitats including wet woodland, fen, reedbed and flood meadow;

- There are many heritage features, including nationally important survivals of ridge and furrow, Roman roads, deserted medieval villages and historic bridges.

- Brick and tile from local clays, timber and thatch are traditional building materials across the area, combined with limestone near the Cotswolds and occasional clunch and wichert near the Chilterns.

- Settlement is sparse on flood plains, apart from at river crossings, where there can be large towns, such as Abingdon. Aylesbury and Bicester are major urban centres, and the outer suburbs of Oxford and Swindon spread into this NCA. Market towns and villages are strung along the springlines of the Chilterns and Downs. Major routes include mainline rail, canals, a network of roads including the M40 and M4 and The Ridgeway and Thames Path National Trails.

1.10 With respect of the broad scale of this NCA and the generality of the information provided, it is appropriate to consider the sub-regional- and district-level assessments as being more relevant in terms of the local circumstances of the application site. Whilst the district-level character assessment is dated, the OWLS project is a more recent study.

***Sub-regional Landscape Character - OWLS***

1.11 There are 24 Landscape Types (LTs) within Oxfordshire. Areas of the same LT share some common characteristics, whilst each individual member of the same LT is also described in terms of its unique qualities. These unique units are known as Local Character Areas (LoCA).

1.12 The application does not fall within any of these rural LTs, but instead sits within the urban area of Bicester, although clearly comprising land that has never been developed. Occupying an urban edge location, its eastern edge abuts Gavray Drive which is adjacent to the Clay Vale LT (and the UT/55 LoCA), to which the character of the application site can be directly related; its character is much less affected by other LTs to the north, south and west due to the developed nature of intervening land.

1.13 Whilst the character of the application site will be discussed in further detail below, surrounding development has an impact on the appreciation of the application site's character and would equally limit potential effects of the proposed development on local LTs. This is not an insignificant point to bear in mind, as the urban setting is as significant a feature of the application site's landscape context as is the rural setting described by the Clay Vale LT.

1.14 The key characteristics of the Clay Vale LT are:

- A flat, low-lying landform;
- Mixed land uses, dominated by pastureland, with small to medium-sized hedged fields;
- Many mature oak, ash and willow hedgerow trees;
- Dense, tree-lined streams and ditches dominated by pollarded willows and poplars; and
- Small to medium-sized nucleated villages.

1.15 UT/55 is described as an *"area… largely dominated by medium-sized semi-improved grass fields. They are enclosed by hawthorn hedges, which in some places are also adjacent to ditches. Mature ash, oak and sycamore hedgerow trees are scattered throughout the area. Pollarded crack willows also border small streams and grow in hedges next to ditches. A dense corridor of ash trees borders the railway line. Hedges are often gappy and fragmented in the northern part of the area."*

1.16 The study also highlights the forces for change, states the landscape strategy and provides a number of guidelines for the LT.

1.17 Forces for change are (see overleaf):

- This is a low-lying vale landscape associated with small pasture fields, many watercourses and hedgerow trees and well defined nucleated villages;

- The hedgerow network is generally in good condition, except where arable farming is dominant and the hedges are either gappy or absent altogether. Hedgerow trees are also sparser in these arable areas;

- The impact of residential development is generally low. There is some development, but it usually it integrates with the existing village pattern. By contrast, industrial, commercial and residential development on the fringes of larger settlements such as north Banbury and Chalgrove can be visually intrusive. Grove Technology Park, to the west of Grove, stands out in otherwise flat open landscape. The weak hedgerow structure is unable to mitigate the visual impact of the Park and the abrupt edges of the town;

- The M40, and its associated infrastructure, has had an impact on the otherwise tranquil pastoral landscape. A row of pylons crossing the area to the north of Waterperry is highly visible and locally intrusive;

- Chalgrove airfield and its associated buildings impact on the surrounding flat open landscape; and

- Occasionally, the large agricultural buildings in the more intensively farmed areas appear out of character.

1.18 The landscape strategy is:

- Conserve the intimate, tranquil and small-scale pastoral character of the landscape; and

- Conserve and enhance the well-defined pattern of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and tree-lined watercourses.

1.19 And, the guidelines are:

- Strengthen the small-scale field pattern by planting up gappy hedges using locally characteristic species such as hawthorn, and hedgerow trees such as oak and ash particularly within roadside hedges;

- Promote environmentally-sensitive maintenance of hedgerows, including coppicing and layering when necessary, to maintain a height and width appropriate to the landscape type;

- Enhance and strengthen the character of tree-lined watercourses by planting willows and ash and, where appropriate, pollarding willows;

- Promote small-scale planting of deciduous woodland blocks using locally characteristic species such as oak and ash;

- Conserve the surviving areas of permanent pasture, particularly ridge and furrow, and promote arable reversion to grassland particularly on land adjacent to watercourses;

- Minimise the visual impact of intrusive land uses at the fringes of towns, villages and farms with the judicious planting of tree and shrub species characteristic to the area. This will help to screen the development and integrate it more successfully with its surrounding countryside; and

- Maintain the nucleated pattern of settlements, and promote the use of building materials and a scale of development and that are appropriate to this landscape type. Local building materials should be used, such as ironstone and stone tiles in the Ironstone area, limestone and stone tiles in the Upper Thames area, and bricks, or stone with bricks, and clay or stone tiles in the Vale of Aylesbury and Vale of White Horse.

***District-level Landscape Character***

1.20 The Cherwell District Landscape Assessment divides the study area into eight broad Landscape Character Areas (LCAs), and at a more local level, seven generic Landscape Types (LTs) (including sub-types), of which six are rural in character, and one is transitional in character. The following text is specific to the site and its local context:

1.21 It is worthy of note that this study was published before development to the south and, to a lesser extent, north of the application site.

1.22 The application site is located within the Otmoor Lowlands LCA, and within transitional LT T5 Urban Fringe (the host LCA and LT). The following key characteristics can be gleaned from the description of the LCA:

- Most of the area lies on Oxford Clay resulting in a generally flat vale landscape. To the north of the area the land begins to rise gently away from the clay vale due to changes in underlying geology, while south of the area the land rises up to the Oxford Heights, where the same geology also causes outcrops within the southern extremities of the LCA, which form distinctive hills isolated from the main ridge of rising ground.

- South of the River Ray, the land is poorly drained, where traditional land cover has consisted of grazed wet meadows with willow pollards lining steams and ditches around Otmoor. Recent improvements in drainage have resulted in a substantial part of the land now under arable cultivation. Fields are large with weak boundaries, giving rise to an exposed landscape.

- A pattern of smaller field sizes has developed on rising ground at the southern edge of the area. On some of the higher slopes there is remnant upland heath with sheep grazing and bracken and gorse. The isolated hills form a distinctive focal feature and have woodland on their brows and tend to be surrounded by military development, which sprawls across the landscape to the east of the area, surrounding Bicester.

- Specific areas around Bicester are dominated by the spread of development sites and urban fringe landscapes (LT T5).

1.23 The T5 Urban Fringe landscape type is described as:

*"Degraded landscapes of the urban fringe, where the main character is given influence by urban, industrial or commercial development and where a former rural, agricultural character has been lost. This includes transport corridors where ribbon development is a significant feature."*

1.24 The study also identifies strategic priorities for landscape conservation and enhancement and includes recommendations for specific actions or improvements to conserve and enhance landscape features that contribute to landscape character. For main strategies have been identified:

- Conservation:
- Repair:
- Restoration; and
- Reconstruction

1.25 Figure 15 in the study identifies a variety of strategies should be employed within the wider LCA, while within the host LT, the specific strategy is defined as Restoration. Restoration landscapes are regarded to be *"… somewhat further along the scale of decline. Their character and structure are quite often seriously degraded, although they do retain some discernible remnants of their former character."* The guidance goes on to say that *"positive intervention should concentrate on strengthening the landscape framework in order to improve landscape quality and create a stronger sense of space."* and that *"Great care should be taken that new development is well sited and sensitively designed so that it does not simply worsen existing problems of poorly integrated, intrusive development."* The guidance lists the following intervention measures that should be encouraged to enhance these landscapes:

- Replanting of hedgerows and hedgerow trees where these have been removed should be encouraged, together with gapping up and improved maintenance of weakening edges;
- There is a good opportunity for extensive woodland planting across the district which as a whole lacks woodland cover. Woodlands should be of a form appropriate to their character area… Species used should be indigenous broadleaves;
- Existing development should be contained within a strong, distinctive landscape framework. There is considerable scope for tightening the landscape structure along road corridors and around urban fringes; and

- New development should be integrated with a strong landscape framework which should be based in features found within the relevant character area, and should respect long views over open countryside.

***Landscape Value***

1.26 The published sub-regional- and district-level landscape character assessments do not make any specific comment on the value or sensitivity of landscape character areas/types. However, it is important to be able to ascribe a value, and ultimately a sensitivity, to landscape receptors in order to be able to attribute a level of effect resulting from the proposed development, as per the Methodology at Appendix 8.5.

1.27 Having taken into account information provided in the published sources, and with reference to EDP's own landscape character assessment (below), the value of the wider local landscape character area is regarded to be medium – reflecting the coherence and generally good condition, though undesignated nature, of the local landscape context.

1.28 However, the value of the landscape type within which the application site is located is adversely affected by proximity to existing development, including industrial uses, and transport corridors. For that reason, the host LT is considered to have a low to medium value.

***Suburban Landscape Character***

1.29 In addition, neighbouring suburbs, which are not covered in the published landscape character assessments, would have views of the application site. However, in landscape character terms, adjacent suburbs would have to 'absorb' additional development as a result of the proposals, and as key constituents of local character, a value must be ascribed.

1.30 Urban areas are generally considered to have a very low value in landscape character terms, although the presence of conservation areas and public open spaces may have the effect of raising the value locally. Given that the immediately surrounding suburbs are not designated as conservation areas, but recognising that there are areas of open space, it is considered that the value would be low. Generally, suburbs are able to accommodate change of the type proposed.

***EDP Landscape Character Assessment***

1.31 A site-specific, detailed, assessment of the landscape circumstances of the local context has been undertaken by appropriately experienced Landscape Architects. This study has included a review of aerial photography, mapping and field assessments to enable EDP to prepare a description of the local landscape character, from which the following key points can be drawn. The viewpoint sheets provided (Figures 8.5 – 8.19, see Appendix 8.3) should also be referenced, as they illustrate the character of the site and surrounding area.

1.32 The site is comprised of two arable fields, separated by a north-south aligned hedgerow with trees; with the larger field (to the east of the boundary hedgerow) occupying c.90% of the site. The site is bounded by hedgerow and wet ditch to the

east, a hedgerow to the south, adjacent to Gavray Drive, with the vegetated embankment of the London-Birmingham railway forming its northern perimeter. The western boundary is currently undefined, but is a short distance from a scrubby hedgerow which lines the Oxford-Bicester line and the route of its planned extension to Bedford.

1.33 The site forms part of a broadly rectangular wedge of undeveloped open space between a large area of residential development to the south and the railway and industrial/commercial land uses to the north. To the east, an area of well-wooded open space constrains the site, beyond which can be found the A4421, forming part of the ring road, which girdles Bicester. To the east of this main road is open countryside. To the west of the site, the Oxford-Bicester line and the route of its planned extension to Bedford, marks a division between the undeveloped wedge of land and the rest of Bicester, initially comprising industrial/commercial units.

1.34 The application site is, therefore, very well contained, both visually and in landscape terms.

1.35 Perceptually, as the site is internally open (other than the dividing hedgerow), it is strongly influenced by the London-Birmingham railway to the north. Gavray Drive, at this point, forms a dead-end, but traffic using it to gain access to or from local residential areas to the south is audible, of not always visible.

1.36 A value of low is ascribed to the application site, arising from its simplicity of landscape structure and lack of notable attributes, and its urban fringe location, adjacent to existing development and railway lines.

***Landscape Character Summary***

1.37 The published landscape character assessments, and EDP's own site assessment, provide an understanding of the characteristics and features of the landscape which have been identified as being defining elements of the nested character areas at different levels.

1.38 While the national level, description (for NCA 108) concentrates on the general character of the landscape, it is unable to portray any useful level of detail, the peculiarities of the local landscape setting of the application site. For that reason, it is necessary to pay particular attention to the sub-regional- and district-level landscape character assessment, and to consider the site-specific assessment undertaken by EDP.

1.39 The published descriptions of the character areas and types covering the study area are largely accurate, and reflect the description of the landscape features and elements present within the application site and its immediate context presented in EDP's own site assessment. The application site, whilst being of an urban fringe character, has been ascribed a medium value, which reflects its unusual complexity of landscape structure within a generally urbanised landscape. Immediately beyond the site area, the urban fringe character, strongly influenced by suburban and

industrial/commercial development, and proximity to major transport corridors, is considered to have a lower value, whilst the more distant, undesignated, rural landscape is considered to have a medium value.

1.40 A common theme regarding landscape strategy is the need to restore and enhance landscapes that have either lost their structure or have been degraded, while new development, which should reflect local styles and methods of construction, should be contained within a strong landscape framework.

**Landscape Designations**

1.41 Landscapes are designated at national, regional or local level, to reflect their acknowledged value. National level designations identify those landscapes of outstanding or highest quality and value, with regional or local designations reflecting a hierarchy of importance below this. All landscapes are different and all are valued to some degree, particularly by those who live, work and relax within them. The differing levels of designation, be it on a national, regional or local level, will have an intrinsic effect upon the inherent sensitivity of them to the development type proposed.

1.42 The application site is not within, or in close proximity to, any landscapes designated at a national level, such as AONBs or National Parks. Landscape and related heritage designations (i.e. Historic Parks and Gardens, and Conservation Areas) within proximity to the application site (up to c.3km distance) are those defined within the planning policy documentation identified previously. SLAs and HPGs are illustrated at Figure 8.1, see Appendix 8.2.

***Areas of High Landscape Value***

1.43 There are no nationally-designated landscapes within the general study area. However, the North Ploughley Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV), covered by saved Local Plan Policy C13, is present c.2.1km to the north – north east of the site. The location of AHLVs is shown on Figure 8.1, see Appendix 8.2.

1.44 All AHLVs, being a local landscape designation, have a medium value.

**Other Considerations:**

***Registered Parks and Gardens***

1.45 There are no RPGs located within 2km of the application site.

1.46 All RPGs, being nationally registered features, have a very high value. However, being heritage assets, the effects on their setting are covered in detail within Chapter 11, Historic Environment.

***Conservation Areas***

1.47 Although not a landscape designation *per se*, Conservation Areas are an indication of areas which have a sensitive landscape or townscape, and which by virtue of their sensitivity contribute to overall landscape character and visual amenity.

1.48 The Bicester Conservation Area is situated within 0.5km south west of the application site. However, is unlikely to have any notable intervisibility with the application site on account of screening by intervening development. With respect to landscape and visual issues, the potential for significant effects is very limited. See Chapter 11, Historic Environment, for an assessment of effects with respect to cultural heritage issues.

1.49 The RAF Bicester Conservation Area approximately 1.25km north of the site, the Chesteron Conservation Area approximately 3km south west and the Straton Audley Conservation Area approximately 3.2km north – north east. The location of these Conservation Areas is shown on Figure 8.1, see Appendix 8.2.

***Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)***

1.50 During the production of the Arboricultural Assessment (BS5837:2012) Cherwell District Council confirmed that none of the trees within the site are subject to a Tree Preservation Order.

1.51 However several trees surveyed, located on the eastern side of Langford Brook and subsequently outside the proposed development area, are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order (Cherwell District Council Tree Preservation Order No 17/90, Confirmed 6th August 1990).

***Ancient Woodland***

1.52 There are no areas of Ancient Woodland (areas of continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD) within or adjacent to the application site's boundaries. The most proximate to the site is Gravenhill Wood, located at Graven Hill, 1.8km to the south-south-west. No effects are anticipated on this group of landscape receptors.

**Visual Amenity Baseline**

1.53 EDP has conducted an assessment of the views available to and from the wider general study area in order to ascertain the likely visual receptors for this assessment.

1.54 To inform this study, a broad area of search was defined using a GIS-based computer program which models the topography of the general study area – allowing consideration of the theoretical visibility of the proposed development. This is based on Landform Profile 5m Digital Terrain Mapping (DTM) and provides a useful starting point for the identification of views towards the application site, although does not present an accurate representation of actual likely visibility. In practice, buildings and vegetation can limit the views available to the extent that fieldwork is essential to ascertain the likely 'actual' visual envelope of the proposed development.

1.55 Following modelling and the study area appraisal, the extent of actual visibility of the proposed development was considered based on views obtainable when trees and hedgerows are not in leaf (the 'worst case' scenario). Visibility of any given site is normally greater in winter (when trees have no leaves), so the suggested best practice guidance recommends that such assessments are carried out in the winter months. EDP's visual assessment survey was largely undertaken in clear, dry conditions in the spring of 2014, when the trees were coming into leaf, and autumn 2014 when the trees were beginning to lose their leaves. Other constraints may affect the timing of survey work, so that the timing of photography may not always be optimal; however, employing professional judgement, this LVIA considers the worst-case scenario and anticipates winter-time visibility.

1.56 In order to aid the assessment of visual amenity, a number of views were selected through consultation with the Local Planning Authority. Viewpoints were agreed with Mr Tim Screen, Landscape Architect, Cherwell District and South Northants District Councils, (see Appendix 8.4 for copies of key correspondence).

1.57 A schedule of the viewpoints is shown below in Table 8.1. These views are presented at Figures 8.5 – 8.19, with their locations shown in context on Figure 8.1 (distant locations) and 8.2 (proximate locations).

1.58 The agreed viewpoints provide representative locations from where the clearest views of the proposed development are anticipated, and in some cases also serve to demonstrate the nature of views screened by intervening features in landscape.

1.59 They represent the range of visual receptors within the local context and are selected to inform the assessment of both landscape and visual effects. Two of these viewpoints assessed included locations within the Area of Great Landscape Value to the north of Bicester.

1.60 The effects are described in the methodology at Appendix 8.5.

**Table 8.1**: Details of Representative Viewpoints Selected to Aid the Assessment

| PVP No. | Location Description | Grid Reference | Approximate Distance to the application site Boundary Within View |
|---|---|---|---|

| PVP No. | Location Description | Grid Reference | Approximate Distance to the application site Boundary Within View |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Public Footpath within the North Ploughley Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV) | SP59406 26760 | 4.15km north of the site |
| 2 | National Trail within the North Ploughley Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV) | SP61108 25875 | 3.7km north – north east of the site |
| 3 | Public Footpath (272/8) | SP60561 21968 | 1.05km east of the site |
| 4 | Public Footpath (272/4) | SP60402 22096 | 0.85km east of the site |
| 5 | Public Footpath (105/5) / Scheduled Monument | SP59719 21201 | 1.05km south of the site |
| 6 | Vehicle route / Pedestrian route / Public open space | SP59599 22196 | Within 0.1km south – south east of the site |
| 7 | Vehicle route / Public Footpath (129/4) / local cycleway | SP59530 22260 | Within 0.1km south – south east of the site |
| 8 | Vehicle route / Public Footpath (129/4) / local cycleway | SP59406 22334 | Within 0.1km south of the site |
| 9 | Mallards Way residential dwellings | SP59295 22335 | Within 0.1km south west of the site |
| 10 | Public Footpath (129/3) within the site area | SP59275 22479 | Within site western extent of site |
| 11 | Public Footpath (129/3) within the site area | SP59369 22580 | Within site north western extent of site |
| 12 | Garth Park public open space | SP58943 22384 | 0.43km west of the site |
| 13 | Public railway bridge (elevated) | SP59055 22433 | 0.2km west – south west of the site |
| 14 | Lauton Road residential dwellings / commercial facilities | SP59143 22596 | 0.17km north west of the site |
| 15 | Public Bridleway | SP56802 24008 | 0.285km north west of the site |

***General Visual Baseline***

1.61 The general visual baseline of the application site is heavily influenced by surrounding land uses, the generally flat topography within the wider study area, and the well-defined vegetated boundaries of the site itself; see Figure 8.4, Appendix 8.2.

1.62 The application site occupies a wedge of undeveloped land within Bicester's built-up area, essentially surrounded by existing residential and industrial/commercial development to the south, west and north. The site is also bordered by a railway line to the north, while another railway is within a short distance of the site's western boundary. To the east of the site, an area of well-wooded open space is bounded by

the A4421, which effectively marks the eastern edge of Bicester. There are limited opportunities for direct views into the site, particularly from highly sensitive receptors.

1.63 The generally flat vale landscape extends over a considerable distance towards the south, where elevation generally falls, but is punctuated by a small number of isolated, prominent hills Graven Hill (1.8km south), Blackthorn Hill (2km south east) and Arncott Hill (3.5km north east). From these elevated locations, views of the site are either difficult to assess or difficult to obtain on account of access restrictions or general screening by intervening development and/or distance. Whilst access to Graven Hill was restricted, it would be possible to estimate the nature of views from this location, and it is likely that views from the top of the hill would be screened by woodland, while potential views from the lower slopes would be affected by intervening development to the south of the site.

1.64 Land gently rises to the north of Bicester, but is not of sufficient elevation to allow a discernible distinction between the general built–up area of Bicester and the site. To the north-east the land rises steeply in the vicinity of Pounden, to 116m, although here too, a combination of distance and intervening development result in no discernible view of the site.

1.65 Vegetation bordering the roads adjacent to, and passing through, the general study area is such that only filtered views are available from locations close to the site. However, although roadside hedgerows would screen of filter views towards the application site, their usefulness in this respect is made redundant by the effective screening afforded by existing development within Bicester, surrounding the site and the well-wooded parcel of land to its immediate east.

1.66 Views of the application site from within Bicester are also limited – to those areas within close proximity of the site – by the existing vegetated boundaries of the site itself, the railway embankment to the north and the scrub-lined railway to the west. The existing developed edge forms the effective limit of intervisibility between the site and the urban area of Bicester, and although there are some glimpses between and above intervening built form from locations set back from the developed edge, these are few in number and geographically constrained.

***Distribution of Formal Rights of Way and Open Access Land***

*Public Rights of Way*

1.67 The general study area is covered by a comprehensive network of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) surrounding Bicester. A single public footpath (ref: 129/3) crosses the site close to its western boundary, which connects to routes to the north and south, including 129/4 on Gavray Drive.

1.68 Visibility of the application site from local public rights of way is very limited and, certainly geographically, to an area no greater than c.1km from the site. There may be other views from surrounding high ground, but as already described, these views

are largely obscured, or the site is rendered indiscernible by other intervening development and/or distance.

1.69 All PRoW, being a local resource, have a high value. There are no areas of Access Land within the general study area.

***Long Distance Recreational Routes***

1.70 There are no long distance walking routes within the detailed study area, although the Cross Bucks Way and the Bernwood Jubilee Way can be found to the far north-east ands east of the general study area. The Cross Bucks Way, begins at Stratton Audley and takes a south-easterly route towards Marsh Gibbon, where it meets and coincides with the Bernwood Jubilee Way as it heads northwards. The Claude Duval Bridleroute also passes through the northern extremity of the general study area between Stratton Audley and Bucknell. Notable Intervisibility with the application site is unlikely from any part of these routes.

1.71 No promoted routes pass the rough the general study area.

1.72 National Cycle Route 51 passes through the wider, general, study area in a north-east to south-west alignment between Pounden and Wendlebury, via Bicester town centre. For the most part, this route follows minor rural roads, but passes the site along Gavrey Drive and the A4421, where views of the site are possible, but largely filtered by, but occasionally open where there are gaps in, the site's boundary hedgerow.

1.73 Regional walking routes have a high value. National cycle routes have a very high value.

***Country Parks***

1.74 There are no Country Parks within the general study area.

***Public Highways and Railways Near to the Application Site***

*Public Highways*

1.75 The application site sits to the north of the western end Gavray Drive, a local distributor road, from which the proposed development would be accessed. Development to the south of this road comprises residential dwellings and a linear open space.

1.76 The A4421 forms the eastern arc of the Bicester ring road, feeding the major radial routes emanating from Bicester. Bicester is neatly contained by this and the other routes forming the ring road (A4095, A41 and B4030), such that there is a clear distinction between urban development on the 'inside' of the ring, and a largely rural landscape on the 'outside'. Although there are two large villages 'attached' to the

outer edge of the ring road, the ring road forms a logical limit to development within Bicester.

1.77 The A41 links the M40 (to the south-west of Bicester) with London, via Aylesbury to the east, following the Roman Road known as Akeman Street. To the north, the A4421 leaves the ring road to join the A421 near Buckingham, also following the route of a Roman Road.

1.78 Local residential streets to the south of Gavray Drive, and within Bicester generally, are connected within the ring road by a network of largely radial B road and unclassified minor routes.

1.79 Beyond Bicester, the radial pattern of main routes is linked by a number of B and minor class rural roads, forming a series of loosely concentric rings around Bicester, within its broad, generally flat, hinterland.

1.80 Views of the site are largely determined by the same constraints previously mentioned. Those routes in close proximity do have some, filtered, occasionally open, views of the site through the site's boundary vegetation, whilst views from more distant routes and from those routes within Bicester, are constrained by other development, hedgerows and trees. In a largely flat landscape, there are few opportunities to gain elevated views above hedgerows or intervening built form.

1.81 Unclassified or minor B-class rural roads have a generally medium value, due to the typical nature of rural views that can be enjoyed on such routes. A-class roads and motorways have a generally low value because of the general purpose and speed of travel. Local suburban roads also have a low value due to the nature of the local environment and the purpose of use. However, roads are usually assessed individually, as lower class roads can be found in urban environments, and higher class (A and motorway) roads often traverse through open countryside. The key to the value is the landscape and visual context through which a road passes, and any designation it may possess, such as promoted tourist route status. None of the routes through the detailed study area are officially designated as tourist routes.

*Railway Routes*

1.82 There are two railway line that pass through the general study area, and both within close proximity of the application site. The Oxford-Bicester line and its planned extension to Bedford (following an existing single line route) takes a north-south route through the town and passes to the west of the site. The London-Birmingham line passes to the north of the site, forming its northern boundary. Both lines are bordered by dense scrubby vegetation and trees. The London-Birmingham line, however, sits on an embankment with views down into and across the site.

1.83 Railway receptors (passengers, generally) have a low value, primarily due to the speed and purpose of travel.

***Key Settlements and Residences***

1.84 Being a potential urban extension development, it is inevitable that there are a number of areas of existing settlement, or individual residences, in proximity. The site survey revealed a number of areas where the inter-relationship between existing dwellings and the application site are notable, and these are described below. It is important to note that views are predicated at ground level and from public locations. It is, therefore, not possible to ascertain with a high degree of certainty the nature of views from individual residences. Views from upper storeys are generally likely to include more of the site than from ground level, although it is not possible to verify this 'rule of thumb'.

1.85 Existing settlements can be grouped as follows, see Figure 8.4, Appendix 8.2:

- Group A – Residential areas to the south of Gavray Drive;
- Group B – Residential areas immediately west of the railway extension to Bedford;
- Group C – The remainder of residential areas within Bicester;
- Group D – Satellite villages surrounding Bicester; and
- Group E – Isolated individual or small groups of dwellings outside Bicester

*Group A – Residential Areas to the South of Gavray Drive*

1.86 This group comprises those properties with views towards the application site, across Gavray Drive. Most ground floor views are screened by garden boundary vegetation (trees lining the southern side of Gavray Drive), and the site's own vegetated boundary. There are upper storey views into the interior of the site from those houses adjacent to Gavray Drive, subject to some filtering by the site boundary. Views tend to be either direct (rear) or side-on. Views of the site from properties behind those immediately adjacent to Gavray Drive are unlikely due to screening by neighbouring buildings, although glimpsed upper storey views between buildings may be possible from some properties.

*Group B - Residential Areas immediately West of the Railway Extension to Bedford*

1.87 Despite their close proximity to the application site, views from houses in this group are unlikely to include the site due to intervening development and vegetation. Although upper storey glimpses may be possible, they are unlikely to be notable.

*Group C - The Remainder of Residential Areas within Bicester*

1.88 Views of the application site from this group are highly unlikely, and in the vast majority of cases certainly non-existent, due to screening by intervening development.

*Group D - Satellite Villages Surrounding Bicester*

1.89 This group comprises the principal villages that surround Bicester. Within the detailed study area, however, it is unlikely that any, even Launton, would have views of the site due to screening by local scrub woodland, the well-wooded parcel of land to the immediate east of the site, the London-Birmingham railway embankment to the north and commercial buildings to the north-east of the site.

*Group E - Isolated Individual or Small Groups of Dwellings outside Bicester*

1.90 There are individual properties/farms to the east of the site that could potentially experience views of the application site. However, screening by hedgerows and trees in the wider landscape, the well-wooded parcel of land to the east of the site, and other urban development, would result in little, if any, intervisibility of the site.

*Value*

1.91 Different receptor types can be found within an urban fringe area. However, the most sensitive of those are residential receptors. In order to define overall sensitivity, it is necessary to determine value. Given that the single largest group of receptors would be residential, the highest value that can be ascribed is very high – typical of views from the windows of primary living spaces (e.g. lounge, living room, and conservatory). However, in many cases it is the rear or side elevation that faces the application site, particularly in close proximity to the site. Whilst it is not possible to say that all primary living spaces can be found along the front elevation, it is more likely to find secondary living spaces on the rear elevation. Secondary living spaces have a high value. However, given that it is not possible to determine the nature and use of rooms facing the application site, a very high value will be ascribed in most cases to ensure a robust assessment.

***Summary of Visual Baseline***

1.92 As would be inevitable for a development of this size, some visibility within, and from, the wider landscape is unavoidable. However, as illustrated in Figure 8.4 (Appendix 8.2), the combination of surrounding urban land uses, the site's own vegetated boundary, the neighbouring well-wooded parcel of land, the London-Birmingham railway embankment, and the combination of largely flat topography and hedgerows in the wider landscape, ensure that visibility of the site is extremely limited, and largely confined to neighbouring receptors, including the residential area immediately south of the site, public rights of way passing through or adjacent to the site, and local roads. The potential for views from the wider countryside are limited to a narrow arc of view to the east – but as described, screening immediately to the east of the site (the neighbouring well-wooded parcel of land and the A4421), would result in little, if any, actual intervisibility.

1.93 Being a hinterland landscape, the influence of existing urban development is to be expected. In this respect, the application site appears well connected visually and perceptually to the existing residential area, south of Gavray Drive. Although the

undeveloped landscape to the immediate east of the site has a wooded character, the site's own vegetated boundary limits views from within the neighbouring parcel, while it and the A4421 act to limit intervisibility between the site and Bicester's hinterland to the east.

**Table 8.7**: Landscape Resource Schedule of Effects during Construction and Operation

| Landscape Resource | Value | Description of View and Construction Effects | Operational Effects | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | ***At Year 1*** | ***At Year 15*** |
| **Sub Regional-level Landscape Character: Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study** | | | | |
| **Host: Bicester Urban Area**<br><br>**-see View 6-14** | *Low* | The site is situated wholly within the urban area of Bicester (the 'host area') but represents landform that has never been developed. OWLS have no published character study for this urban area. None the less, construction activities would not directly affect the wider landscape as the physical effects of construction would be well contained within the limit of the site which it can succinctly accommodate (i.e. changes to fabric and character to a more urban setting).<br><br>Indirect effects relating to the immediate urban area of Bicester relate to lighting, noise, vibration and the movement of materials to/from the proposed development. Generally, noise/vibration effects would be most acutely perceived by residents adjacent to the application site (i.e. south at neighbourhoods off Gavray Drive). Such indirect effects are less likely to be appreciable to the north and west of the site due to the intervening railway lines, industrial activities off Charbridge Road and Charbridge Way.<br><br>The construction works would lead to a loss of some trees and hedgerows, where access would be necessary, and include localised ground remodelling. Some of the effects would be temporary in nature, as it is proposed that the ground disturbed during the creation of the attenuation feature is returned to grassland. The works would require temporary lighting where previously there was little street lighting.<br><br>None of the landscape components within the site and its immediate context are unusual or particularly rare within the wider landscape setting (including the adjoining Clay Vale landscape Type) and are typical of an urban-fringe location. Taking these matters into account, it is considered that the value of the site is low.<br><br>The susceptibility to change to the type of development proposed, retaining some elements of the baseline landscape character, is low. Combining value and susceptibility to change results in medium sensitivity.<br><br>Construction activities will be stark and not benefit from the softening effects of strategic landscape planting. Taking these matters into account, the overall magnitude of change at the level of the parcel is considered to be very high at site level (effects on the wider landscape reduce quickly).<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Given a very high magnitude of change and a low sensitivity, the level of effect on local landscape resource at this location is **moderate**, short term in nature, and **locally significant in EIA terms.** | As noted, no detailed layout or planting plans are available on which to base this assessment, and therefore assumptions are made based on the Parameters Plan. At Year 1 the proposed development will have replaced all pre-existing farmland with residential uses and some public open space. Trees and hedgerows will be retained where possible; indeed, the retention and incorporation into the scheme of such features is given a high priority. The baseline characterisation describes the undulating, agricultural land use of this unit, and its urban-rural fringe character; the landscape being of generally good to fair quality, with a number of landscape detractors including an overhead power line.<br><br>Topography is a key characteristic of the parcel, trees and substantial hedgerows. These will be retained and enhanced wherever possible.<br><br>Notwithstanding sensitive design and mitigation, the development of the site will permanently change the character from urban-fringe agriculture to urban. Whilst mitigation planting at this stage would not have any perceptible effect, the screening qualities of existing trees and hedgerows would have a noticeable impact on containing landscape effects both internally and externally, particularly to the south.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Given a very high magnitude of change and a medium sensitivity, the level of effect on landscape resource at this location is **moderate**, adverse, permanent and **locally significant in EIA terms.** | Despite the absence of detailed planting plans, it is envisaged that in the long term, both maturing vegetation and existing vegetation will soften the direct effects of the development.<br><br>The development would integrate with existing built form to the south and west that characterises the urban edge of Bicester adding further weight to this distinct and legible settlement edge. However, overall, the proposed development would have a with relatively limited urbanising effects on the adjoining rural areas Bicester is already defined by strong urban form i.e. railway line, A4421 main roadway and also the relatively modern built form including industrial units and residential settlement.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Through maturity of mitigation measures combined with existing inherent mitigation and an already urban setting, the residual effect of the proposed development is likely to diminish in adverse effects to a barely discernible situation. The residual effect is considered to be very low, adverse – negligible in the long term. This effect will be permanent and **not locally significant in EIA terms.** |
| **Neighbouring: Clay Vale Landscape Type**<br><br>**(June 2014)** | *Medium* | The immediate context of the site is its close proximity to the adjacent Clay Vale Landscape Type to which the current character of the site can be more directly attributed to (within the backdrop of the Bicester urban area).<br><br>The principal components of the Clay Vale landscape type (sub-regional)) are discussed as follows. This landscape type extends from the vale landscapes adjacent to the northern part | ***Significance***<br><br>The proposed development would be experienced from the wider area representing a very low magnitude of change. This change would be | Despite the absence of detail planting proposals at this stage, it is envisaged that in the long term, both maturing vegetation and existing vegetation will strengthen the existing landscape character and also reduced the |

| Landscape Resource | Value | Description of View and Construction Effects | Operational Effects | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | ***At Year 1*** | ***At Year 15*** |
| **-see View 3-4** | | of the River Cherwell to the Upper Thames area south of Bicester. It also occupies a large part of the Vale of White Horse to the north-east of Wantage and borders part of the River Thame and its tributaries. This is a low-lying vale landscape associated with small pasture fields, many watercourses and hedgerow trees and well defined nucleated villages.<br><br>This landscape type review summarises the key positive and negative attributes and key issues for this LCA. The character appraisal recognises it's distinctive, rural, character and the pressures placed upon it from industrial, commercial and residential development on the fringes of urban settlements which can be visually intrusive. The M40 motorway can be visually intrusive, whilst the degradation of hedgerows through dominant arable farming can lead to a 'gappy' are a range of patterns of change that would potentially affect the area in proximity of the application site. The application site, however, occupies a location where the urban edge is strong, and the distinction between urban and rural is relatively clear-cut.<br><br>Indirect effects on Clay Vale landscape character within the wider are created by lighting, noise, vibration and traffic.<br><br>It is likely indirect, perceptual, effects would occur to the Clay Vale landscape type including construction activities whereby lighting, noise, vibration and the movement of materials to/from the proposed development might be disruptive on a temporary basis. Such indirect effects are less likely to be appreciable to the north and west of the site due to the intervening railway lines, industrial activities off Charbridge Road and Charbridge Way.<br><br>It is anticipated, where perceived effects occur they would be short-term and temporary in nature and minimised by an appropriate construction management plan designed to reduce the effects on the existing landscape receptors.<br><br>Construction activities would not directly affect the wider landscape as the physical effects of construction (i.e. changes to fabric and character) would be contained within the application site and its immediate context and do not extend unacceptably within the wider landscape.<br><br>Taking these matters into account, the overall magnitude of change is considered to be low albeit these changes would be perceived locally and not across the wider Clay Vale character area.<br><br>***Significance***<br>The value of the wider Clay Vale landscape type context is assessed to be medium. The susceptibility to the type of development proposed is medium. Combining value and susceptibility to change results in medium sensitivity. The magnitude of change on the wider landscape character context is considered to be low; the level of effect would be **minor** short-term and reversible which is **not significant in EIA terms.** | experienced locally to the site in the threshold of the surrounding landscape character, and not across the wider Clay Value area. This change to landscape fabric and character would be within the urban threshold surrounding the application site.<br><br>The magnitude of change on the wider landscape character context is considered to be low; the level of effect would be **minor - negligible** overall, adverse, permanent and **not significant in EIA terms.** | perception of impact indirectly surrounding the site area within the urban area and also the wider Clay Vale landscape type.<br><br>Through appropriate design the proposed development would form a distinct and legible settlement edge with relatively limited urbanising effects on the adjoining rural area.<br><br>Locally, the development will provide contribute further to the already established strong urban-rural interface, but will remain relatively well-contained by existing and new planting, albeit the urban edge will extend further into the hinterland landscape than currently is the case which may be perceived to a limited extent.<br><br>***Significance***<br>Over the short – to – medium term, the likely significance of effects would be **negligible overall**, adverse, permanent and **not significant in EIA terms.** |
| **District-level Landscape Character: Cherwell District Landscape Assessment** | | | | |
| **Host: T5 Urban Fringe**<br><br>**-see View 6-14** | *Low* | The site is situated on an urban fringe (T5 Urban Fringe) adjoining the Otmoor Lowlands Landscape Character Area.<br><br>The T5 Urban area is recognised as a 'degraded landscape of the urban fringe, where the main character is influenced by urban, industrial or commercial development and where a former rural, agricultural character has been lost.' Therefore, the site occupies a transitional area lying between the Bicester urban areas and surrounding rural environment.<br><br>None of the landscape components within the site and its immediate context are unusual or particularly rare within the wider landscape setting (including the adjoining Otmoor Lowland | The proposed development would have a direct effect on a relatively small portion of the Bicester urban area and the adjoining (limited by the railway embankment, robust hedgerow pattern and groups of mature tree components),<br><br>By replacing existing urban-fringe agricultural land would extend the | Despite the absence of detailed planting plans, it is envisaged that in the long term, both maturing vegetation and existing vegetation will soften the direct effects of the development.<br><br>The development would integrate with existing built form to the south and west that characterises the urban edge of Bicester |

| Landscape Resource | Value | Description of View and Construction Effects | Operational Effects | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | ***At Year 1*** | ***At Year 15*** |
| | | landscape character area) and are typical of an urban-fringe location Taking these matters into account; it is considered that the value of the unit is medium.<br><br>The susceptibility to change to the type of development proposed, retaining some elements of the baseline landscape character, is medium. Combining value and susceptibility to change results in medium sensitivity.<br><br>Construction activities will be stark and not benefit from the softening effects of strategic landscape planting. Taking these matters into account, the overall magnitude of change at the level of the parcel is considered to be very high at site level (effects on the wider landscape reduce quickly, with distance, as noted above).<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Given a very high magnitude of change and a low sensitivity, the level of effect on local landscape resource at this location is **moderate**, short term in nature, **and significant locally in EIA terms.** | influence of built form within a small proportion of the host area – Bicester urban area. This effect would be well contained within the Bicester urban area and not extend unduly out across the surrounding urban environment. Therefore, the proposed development would not appear incongruous and any potential impact is limited locally.<br><br>The proposed development creates new residential built form within the existing confines of the Bicester urban setting with a development appropriate in scale to its immediate context off Gavray Drive.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Overall, the landscape value of the local area is assessed to be low. The susceptibility to change to the type of development proposed is medium. Combining value and susceptibility results in a medium – low sensitivity. The magnitude of change on the wider landscape character context is considered to be low; the level of effect would be **moderate** overall, adverse, permanent and **significant locally in EIA terms.** | resulting in a distinct and legible settlement edge with relatively limited urbanising effects on the adjoining rural area.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Through maturity of mitigation measures combined with existing inherent mitigation and an already urban setting, the residual effect of the proposed development is likely to diminish in adverse effects to a barely discernible situation. The residual effect is considered to be **very low, adverse – negligible** in the long term. This effect will be permanent and **not locally significant in EIA terms.** |
| **Neighbouring: Otmoor Lowlands Landscape Character Area**<br><br>**-see View 15** | *Medium* | The adjoining landscape character area which forms the landscape threshold to the site, and the principal components include generally flat vale landscape topography with a pattern of smaller field sizes with some areas of poor drainage. The character appraisal by Cherwell District Council recognises landscape pressure to include 'specific areas around Bicester are dominated by the spread of development sites and that 'new development should be integrated with a strong framework which should be based on features found within the character area, and should respect long views over open countryside.'<br><br>Indirect, perceptual, effects would occur, principally in relation to lighting, noise, vibration and the movement of materials to/from the proposed development. Generally, noise/vibration effects would not significantly affect the wider landscape area. Any physical effects would be constrained within the limit of the site, or by the adjoining earthwork embankments or being absorbed across the wider urban area of Bicester before this adjoining landscape character area.<br><br>***Significance***<br>The value of the wider Otmoor Lowlands Landscape Character is assessed to be medium. The susceptibility to the type of development proposed is medium. Combining value and susceptibility to change results in medium sensitivity. The magnitude of change on the wider landscape character context is considered to be low; the level of effect would be **minor** short-term and reversible which is **not significant in EIA terms.** | The proposed development would have a limited indirect effect on neighbouring landscape area. Whilst this change undoubtedly results in effects, these effects are self contained and would be wholly consistent with that of existing suburbs.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Overall, the landscape value of the local area is assessed to be medium. The susceptibility to change to the type of development proposed is medium. Combining value and susceptibility results in a medium sensitivity. The magnitude of change on the wider landscape character context is considered to be low; the level of effect would be **minor - negligible** overall, adverse, permanent and **not significant in EIA terms.** | Despite the absence of detail planting proposals at this stage, it is envisaged that in the long term, both maturing vegetation and existing vegetation will strengthen the existing landscape character and also reduced the perception of impact indirectly from the site.<br><br>Through appropriate design the development would form a distinct and legible settlement edge with relatively limited urbanising effects on the adjoining rural area.<br><br>The proposed development is to be situated in the hinterland of urban fringe area. However, the existing road network, prominent rail line and modern built form (residential and industrial) have already established a strong urban edge to Bicester. Therefore, the proposed development would strengthen this existing situation albeit extending the urban edge to the existing main communication routes but not adversely affecting the status quo of the current environment.<br><br>***Significance*** |

| Landscape Resource | Value | Description of View and Construction Effects | Operational Effects | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | ***At Year 1*** | ***At Year 15*** |
| | | | | Over the short – to – medium term, the likely significance of effects would be **negligible overall**, adverse, permanent and **not significant in EIA terms.** |
| **North Ploughley Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV) -see View 1 and 2** | *High* | Due to a combination of distance, and intervening topography and woodland, it is unlikely that any construction activities would be perceptible from any Special Landscape Areas (SLAs). The only possible exception may be glimpses of the site crane in some elevated views.<br><br>Being locally-designated, this AHLV has a high value, and when combined with a high susceptibility to the type of change proposed results in a high sensitivity. Given the combination of distance and screening by topography and woodland, there is very limited intervisibility between the site and AHLV. The maximum magnitude of change, at a limited number of locations, is considered to be very low.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Given a very low magnitude of change (at most) and a high sensitivity, the level of effect on this landscape designations is **considered to negligible - none,** short term in nature, reversible and **not significant in EIA terms**. In the vast majority of locations the effects will be either negligible or no change. | When perceived against the already established urban edge of Bicester with main vehicular routes, railway linkages and existing residential built form to the outskirts of the town, it is considered that there would be no change in the level of effect at Year 1, which would remain **negligible - none** and **not significant in EIA terms.** | There would be no change in the level of effect at Year 15, which would remain **negligible - none** and **not significant in EIA terms.** |

**Table 8.8**: Visual Amenity Schedule of Effects during Construction and Operation - Viewpoints

| Receptor | Value | Description of View and Construction Effects | Operational Effects | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | ***At Year 1*** | ***At Year 15*** |
| **Viewpoint 1:** PRoW within North Ploughley Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV) – Viewpoint agreed with LPA | | | | |
| Users of PRoW | Very High | The view is situated on a public footpath within a designated Area of High Landscape Value and therefore has potentially a very high visual sensitivity. This view is situated in excess of 4km north of the application site looking south - south east across a landscape scene which is enclosed beyond the broad open agricultural fields.<br><br>In the current situation the main focus of the view are the open agricultural fields with robust hedgerows and mature tree groups which screen views of the urban area at Bicester and the rail links (Oxford – to – Bicester and London – to – Birmingham). Similarly the application site is not readily visible as is inherently mitigated by existing interlying mature landscape features including field hedgerows and mature tree groups. The intervening topography gently undulates circa 95mAOD at the site southwards towards the site at circa 65mAOD.<br><br>Construction activities within the application site would not be discernible during the summer or winter time due to the effect of interlying landscape features and the intervening built form which inherently screen. The proposed development has a relatively shallow vertical face and as such would not require the erection of cranes which would otherwise break the skyline and be readily seen. Given the interlying distance it is unlikely noise and site lighting would be perceptible.<br><br>This location has a very high value (i.e. visual amenity within an AHLV) and affords and its susceptibility to change is potentially high resulting in an overall sensitivity of very high. It is considered that the magnitude of change at this location would be nil.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>It is anticipated that the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **none** during this short term, temporary phase. This effect is **not significant in EIA terms.** | At Year 1, the proposed development is inherently screened from this representative viewpoint within the North Ploughley Area of High Landscape Value. This effect is likely from Year 1 of the proposed development.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Given a nil magnitude of change the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **none at Year 1**.<br><br>Therefore, the anticipated effect is **not significant in EIA terms.** | It is considered that inherent screening would continue to mitigate the proposed development offsetting any long term residual effect.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Given a negligible / nil magnitude of change the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **none at Year 15.**<br><br>Therefore, the anticipated residual effect is **not significant in EIA terms.** |
| **Viewpoint 2:** National Trail within North Ploughley Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV) – viewpoint agreed with LPA | | | | |
| Users of PRoW | Very High | Similar to viewpoint 1, this view is situated on a National Trail (Cross Bucks Way) within a designated Area of High Landscape Value and therefore has potentially a very high visual sensitivity. This view is situated in excess of 3km north east of the application site looking south - south west across a landscape scene which is enclosed beyond the broad open agricultural fields.<br><br>In the current situation the main focus of the view are the open agricultural fields with robust hedgerows and mature tree groups which enclose views of the urban area at Bicester. Despite the viewpoint located at 95mAOD and the intervening topography gently undulating towards the site (circa 65mAOD), direct views of the application site are screened by intervening mature landscape features which are layered within the interlying landscape to mask the urban setting of Bicester as a whole (with the application site situated within).<br><br>Construction activities within the application site would not be discernible during the summer or winter time due to the effect of interlying landscape features and the intervening built form which inherently screen. The proposed development has a relatively shallow vertical face and as such would not require the erection of cranes which would otherwise break the skyline and be readily seen. Given the interlying distance it is unlikely noise and site lighting would be perceptible.<br><br>This location has a very high value (i.e. visual amenity within an AHLV) and affords and its susceptibility to change is potentially high resulting in an overall sensitivity of very high. It is considered that the magnitude of change at this location would be nil.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>It is anticipated that the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **none** during this short term, temporary phase. This effect is **not significant in EIA terms.** | At Year 1, the proposed development is inherently screened from this representative viewpoint within the North Ploughley Area of High Landscape Value. This effect is likely from Year 1 of the proposed development.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Given a negligible / nil magnitude of change the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **none at Year 1**.<br><br>Therefore, the anticipated effect is **not significant in EIA terms.** | The proposed development is inherently screened from Year this representative viewpoint within the North Ploughley Area of High Landscape Value. This effect is anticipated to still be the case at Year 15 of the proposed development.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Given a negligible / nil magnitude of change the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **none at Year 15.**<br><br>Therefore, the anticipated residual effect is **not significant in EIA terms.** |

| Receptor | Value | Description of View and Construction Effects | Operational Effects | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | *At Year 1* | *At Year 15* |
| **Viewpoint 3:** PRoW south west of Lauton village – viewpoint agreed with LPA | | | | |
| Users of PRow | High | This viewpoint is situated on a public footpath looking across an interlying landscape which has not designations; therefore as such the viewpoint has a high value and a high sensitivity to visual amenity. The viewpoint is situated at a similar topography to the site at circa 65mAOD.<br><br>This view is situated within 1km north east of the site on a public right of way outside the outlying village of Lauton. Lauton is situated on the eastern outskirts of Bicester (Group E – Isolated individual or small groups of dwellings outside Bicester). This view overlooks the existing edge of Bicester defined with mature roadside planting and earthworks (A4421Charbridge Road) and large scale industrial built forms (which are located to the north of the application site).<br><br>The application site is inherently screened by the interlying earthworks and mature landscape features along the London-to-Birmingham rail line and surrounding urban edge.<br><br>Construction activities within the application site would not be discernible during the summer or winter time due to the effect of interlying earthwork embankment (A4421 Charbridge Road) and large scale built form (Charbridge Way).Furthermore, construction noise and lighting is unlikely to be perceived at this viewpoint due to the effect of the intervening A4421 Charbridge Road (with elevated lighting columns).<br><br>This public footpath affords links to the wider landscape area from Lauton and connections to the eastern edge of Bicester urban area. It is considered whilst the viewpoint has a high value , the overall visual sensitivity and susceptibility to change is likely to be medium due to its proximity to the urban area, main roadway and rail link (all with inherent effects).<br><br>The magnitude of change at this location would be nil as the proposed development would have be inherently screened.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>It is anticipated that the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **none** during this short term, temporary phase. This effect is **not significant in EIA terms.** | Currently, the application site is inherently screened from this location, and it is considered that this effect would continue from Year 1 of the proposed development.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Given a negligible / nil magnitude of change the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **none at Year 1**.<br><br>Therefore, the anticipated effect is **not significant in EIA terms.** | After 10-15 years, it is considered that the residual effect of the proposed development would be similar to Year 1 and inherent mitigation would continue to afford the proposed development screening sufficient to offset its permanent effect.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Given a negligible / nil magnitude of change the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **none at Year 15.**<br><br>Therefore, the anticipated residual effect is **not significant in EIA terms.** |
| **Viewpoint 4:** PRoW (elevated) crossing the London – to – Birmingham rail line – viewpoint agreed with LPA | | | | |
| | High<br><br>(re-assessed on site to Medium) | This viewpoint is situated on a public footpath which crosses a main rail link (London – Birmingham) which can be seen running along the northern boundary of the application site.<br><br>This view is situated within 1km east of the application site within elevated topography where the Public Footpath crosses the London – to – Birmingham rail line. The viewpoint looks across intervening landscape which has no formal designations, which combined with the setting of the viewpoint on a rail link (with associated inherent effects), it is considered that the viewpoint actually has a medium value and medium visual sensitivity / susceptibility to change similar to the proposed development.<br><br>The view is dominated by the rail line with large scale built form around Charbridge Road / Way also discernible with built form landmarks within Bicester (low rise) visible in the wider scene against the skyline with dense mature tree groups within the interlying landscape (albeit with residential development situated within).<br><br>Currently, the application site is inherently screened from this viewpoint t by mature tree groups and vegetation along the rail line i.e. A4421 Charbridge Road and around the River Ray Conservation Target Area to the east of Langford Brook.<br><br>It is anticipated that construction effects would be diminished by the presence of the railway line and the A4421 Charbridge Road (street lighting to this main arterial route).However, the construction of the upper rooflines of new built form to be discernible albeit filtered by existing intervening mature trees which in turn would screen the lower extent of the same built form. The relative shallow vertical face of the proposed built form would not require the | At Year 1 the effect of construction phase would have ceased, whilst the proposed development might be discernible at its upper rooflines, the effect of current mature landscape features would continue to inherently mitigate the proposed development. Therefore, the magnitude of change is unlikely to have changed by this stage and remains low (if at all appreciable against the existing urban edge of Bicester).<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>The level of effect at this viewpoint location is **negligible, adverse** (if at all) i.e. a detectable but non-material change to the visual amenity. This effect would be permanent and **not significant in EIA terms.** | It is considered that the sight of the upper roof lines within the proposed development would reduce over time with the growth of young mature trees within intervening area and the maturity of landscape mitigation planting to the eastern site area. Therefore, it is envisaged that in the long term maturing vegetation will soften views towards the development from this location.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Mitigation would reduce the overall level of effect, but given the significance of current inherent mitigation the overall residual effect is likely to be **negligible, adverse – none** (if at all) which is **not significant in EIA terms.** |

| Receptor | Value | Description of View and Construction Effects | Operational Effects | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | *At Year 1* | *At Year 15* |
| | | use of an erected crane which would other wise break the skyline.<br>The magnitude of change at this location would be low i.e. an alteration to the existing 'open-ness' of the existing view within which mature landscape features are seen; therefore, the proposed development would be partially visible albeit at roofline level.<br>***Significance***<br>It is anticipated that the level of effect at this viewpoint location is **minor, adverse (**initially short term in nature during the construction phase) but **not significant in EIA terms.** | | |
| **Viewpoint 5:** PRoW / Scheduled Monument (Site of Medieval Village of Wrethwick) – viewpoint agreed with LPA | | | | |
| Users of PRoW | High | This view is situated on a public footpath close to / adjacent to a Scheduled Monument and as such has a high visual amenity value and visual sensitivity. The viewpoint is located a similar topography to the application site i.e. 65,m,AOD looking north – north west across an existing pastoral field enclosed by robust hedgerows and mature tree components.<br>The view focusses on the Middle Wrethwick Farm farmstead and associated agricultural infrastructure including barns and a mature group of poplar trees. The A4421 (Seelscheid Way) and the south eastern area of Bicester is situated beyond the interlying farmstead and further agricultural fields.<br>The application site is inherently screened b y the intervening farmstead and mature landscape features surrounding the setting of the viewpoint. For instance; the rail link (London – Birmingham) bounding the northern site boundary is not visible in the landscape scene (despite being elevated).<br>Construction activities within the application site would not be discernible during the summer or winter time due to the effect of interlying features and the intervening built form which screens the proposed development. The modest vertical face of the new residential development would not require the erection of cranes which would otherwise break the skyline and be readily seen. Given the interlying distance it is unlikely noise and site lighting would be perceptible especially against the current effects of A4421 (Seelschield Way)<br>This viewpoint has a high visual sensitivity whilst its susceptibility to change from the proposed development is diminished by its immediate setting and intervening screening. It is considered that the magnitude of change at this location would be nil.<br>***Significance***<br>It is anticipated that the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **none** during this short term, temporary phase. The potential effects are **not significant in EIA terms.** | Currently the application site is inherently screened, which it is considered would continue to be the case at Year 1. It is anticipated there would be no discernible effect at Year 1 of the proposed development.<br>***Significance***<br>Given a negligible / nil magnitude of change the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **none at Year 1**.<br>Therefore, the anticipated effect is **not significant in EIA terms.** | The proposed development is inherently screened from this representative viewpoint. This effect is anticipated to still be the case at Year 15 of the proposed development.<br>***Significance***<br>Given a negligible / nil magnitude of change the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **none at Year 15.**<br>Therefore, the anticipated residual effect is **not significant in EIA terms.** |
| **Viewpoint 6:** Pedestrian footpath through public open space and local cycle route off Gavray Drive situated south east of the site within 0.1km – viewpoint agreed with LPA | | | | |
| Users of P | High | This viewpoint is situated on a pedestrian footpath and a locally promoted cycle (accessed from Sustrans NCR 51) within public open space in an urban edge setting. It is considered that the value of the viewpoint is medium within an urban context i.e. views of clearly less value and route not taken for appreciation of landscape. Accordingly visual sensitivity and susceptibility to change are considered to medium.<br>This view is situated on a pedestrian route and local cycle route to the south east of the application site within similar topography to the proposed development. The view is dominated by the mature landscape setting with trees and vegetation beyond which is Gavary Drive. Currently the application site is screened by the existing robust tree groups and vegetation along the southern site boundary, whilst the skyline is broken by the street lighting columns situated on Gavray Drive. The large scale built form north of the railway line and embankment is not discernible from this location. | At Year 1 the effect of construction phase would have ceased, whilst the proposed development might be discernible at its upper residential rooms and rooflines, the effect of current mature landscape features would continue to inherently filter these elements and screen the lower storey and ancillary development.<br>The provision of landscape mitigation and ancillary planting is unlikely to have a significant effect at Year 1.<br>None the less, the new development would | The proposed development is inherently screened from this representative viewpoint. This effect is anticipated to still be the case at Year 15 of the proposed development.<br>***Significance***<br>The retention of existing vegetation and the maturity of new landscape mitigation and ancillary planting would further soften the new development. It is considered that residually the proposed development would |

| Receptor | Value | Description of View and Construction Effects | Operational Effects | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | ***At Year 1*** | ***At Year 15*** |
| | | As a pedestrian footway and local cycle route through public open space this location has a high value. However, given the urban context of its location and the perception of Gavray Drive (and vehicle use) the susceptibility to change is medium. Combined with a high value, the result is an overall sensitivity of medium. There is potential for the construction of the proposed development might be perceived through external lighting, noise, dust and vibration from within the site. Additionally, the erection of new built form including scaffolding might be recognisable.<br><br>The magnitude of change at this location would be low i.e. the proposed development will form a minor constituent of the view being partially visible and would be a small component of the view. This level of effect is considered to be accurate as existing vegetation along Gavray Drive or intervening residential dwellings would screen.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>It is considered that the level of effect at this viewpoint location is **moderate - minor, adverse,** short term in nature, reversible but **not significant in EIA terms** i.e. a slight but non-material change to the landscape resource or visual amenity. | be seen against the existing residential development within Bicester urban area; therefore, the magnitude of change is likely to be less significant. At Year 1 the proposed development would appear as a new element within the view which extended the existing urban form (similar built form, height and mass as the surrounding environment).<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>The level of effect at this viewpoint location is **negligible, adverse** (if at all) i.e. a detectable but non-material change to the visual amenity. This effect would be permanent and **not significant in EIA terms.** | have little adverse visual effect.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>The level of effect at this viewpoint location is **negligible, adverse** (if at all) i.e. a detectable but non-material change to the visual amenity. This effect would be permanent and **not significant in EIA terms.** |
| **Viewpoint 7:** PRoW (129/4) / Sustrans NCR 51 Cycle Route along a public vehicular route – viewpoint requested by the LPA | | | | |
| Users of PRoW, NCR 51 and vehicle route users | Low - High | This viewpoint is situated on a public footpath with a nationally promoted cycle route (Sustrans NCR 51) to the south of the application site within similar topography to the site. Ordinarily such a viewpoint would be considered to have a high value and a high visual sensitivity; however, the route passes through an urban edge setting which is unlikely to be taken exclusively for the appreciation of the landscape. Therefore it is considered that the viewpoint has a medium visual sensitivity and medium susceptibility to change.<br><br>The view looks north west across the open site area towards the railway link on an elevated embankment (London – Birmingham) which is currently undergoing works. The skyline is broken by the street lighting columns situated on Gavray Drive and the view is dominated by Gavray Drive in the foreground heading easterly. The large scale built form situated on Lauton Road is discernible above the existing mature landscape setting.<br><br>During construction it is inevitable that activities within the application site would be seen (especially through the existing degraded vegetation). The field area immediate to this viewpoint would not be developed with new residential built form; however, flood prevention / drainage engineering works would be undertaken. These engineering works would be visible during the construction phase. The mature tree and robust vegetation further west along Gravray Drive would screen some minor areas of the proposed development during construction.<br><br>It is considered that the magnitude of change would be medium i.e. the construction of new residential buildings and ancillary development including the drainage / flood prevention engineering works. The activities of construction plant, equipment and traffic and the storage of material would be readily visible.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>It is anticipated that the level of effect at this viewpoint location is **moderate,** short term in nature, reversible and **significant in EIA terms locally.** | The appreciation of this view is likely to change as a result of the proposed development with an obvious view of the new residential buildings and ancillary development including the drainage / flood prevention engineering works. These new features would be recognisable new elements within the view and would be perceived as a new addition to the landscape scene albeit within an already urban setting. This new development would be 'infilling' urban development within the existing parameters of the urban area i.e. Gavray Drive and its residential development and the dominant railway line and industrial units to the north combined with the perception of further urban areas of Bicester to the west of this location.<br><br>The benefit of landscape mitigation measures is unlikely to afford any significant effect at Year 1.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>The level of effect at Year 1 would be **moderate - minor, adverse.** The effect within the site would be a material change through the loss of agricultural land, but there would be no material change to the wider urban setting as a result of the new development at Year1. Therefore it is anticipated the change to visual amenity would be less adverse at the Year 1 stage. | Despite the absence of detailed planting plans, it is envisaged that in the long term maturing vegetation will significantly filter views towards the development from this location.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Mitigation would reduce the level of effect through the establishment and expedient maturity of landscape buffer planting to the south eastern site boundary and within the wider site including ancillary landscaping to significantly filter views. In the medium term this effect would be similar to the existing landscape along Gavray Drive west of this viewpoint.<br><br>Therefore, the overall level of effects is likely to change, and diminish in its adversity to a minor – negligible, adverse situation. This effect would remain negligible, adverse in the long term to permanent by Year 15 and beyond.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>By Year 15 it is anticipated the residual effect would have diminished through the maturity of landscape mitigation and ancillary planting which would soften the new development with significant filtering.<br><br>Within the context of the existing Bicester urban area it is considered the new |

| Receptor | Value | Description of View and Construction Effects | Operational Effects | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | ***At Year 1*** | ***At Year 15*** |
| | | | These effects would be **permanent but not significant in EIA terms.** | development would represent **minor - negligible, adverse,** permanent but **not significant in EIA terms.** |
| **Viewpoint 8:** PRoW (129/4) / Sustrans NCR 51 Cycle Route along a public vehicular route – viewpoint requested by the LPA | | | | |
| Users of PRoW, NCR 51 and vehicle route users | Low - High | Similar to the previous viewpoint, this viewpoint is situated on a public footpath with a nationally promoted cycle route (Sustrans NCR 51) to the south of the application site within similar topography to the site. Ordinarily such a viewpoint would be considered to have a high value and a high visual sensitivity; however the route passes through an urban edge setting which is unlikely to be taken exclusively for the appreciation of the landscape. This viewpoint is opposite one of the proposed access routes into the application site and therefore it is considered would have a high visual sensitivity and high susceptibility to change (especially during the construction phase). .<br><br>The existing access point would be used during construction which would be visually disruptive with the movement of plant, construction vehicles and workforce. The effects of dust, noise, artificial lighting and vibration would be apparent at this close range. There would be open views to the site are for new built form and ancillary development; for instance, roadways, pedestrian footways and the landscaping if front amenity space which would appear initially incongruous. Views of the wider site are would continue to be screened through the retention of the existing vegetation along Gavray Drive east and west of this location.<br><br>The magnitude of change at this location would be medium i.e. the construction of new residential buildings and ancillary development including the drainage / flood prevention engineering works. The activities of construction plant, equipment and traffic and the storage of material would be readily visible.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Given a high to medium magnitude of change and a high sensitivity, the level of effect at this viewpoint location is **moderate, adverse** short term in nature, reversible and **significant locally in EIA terms.** | The appreciation of this view is likely to change as a result of the proposed development with an obvious view of the new access route and residential built form.<br><br>For similar reasons as above the likely effect at Year 1 would be diminished by the existing urban setting of the view. The change to the scene would be detectable but the new development would not appear as a noticeable material change. The urban setting surrounding the viewpoint is perceivable with existing residential development and industrial buildings, railway, A4421 main roadway all perceivable.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>The level of effect at Year 1 would be **minor, adverse**, permanent i.e. a non-material change to visual amenity. This effect would be permanent but **not significant in EIA terms.** | Despite the absence of detailed planting plans, it is envisaged that in the long term maturing vegetation will benefit views towards the new development by Year 15 and residually the overall effect would not be unacceptably adverse.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>It is considered that the effect of mature mitigation and ancillary planting would benefit the new development, the presence of the access route and surrounding built form would continue to be an obvious feature of this view. Mitigation would benefit the scheme softening the new built form with filtering and providing a more mature landscape setting so the new development would appear less incongruous. However it is considered the residual effect would be similar to Year 1.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>The level of effect at Year 1 would be **minor, adverse**, permanent i.e. a non-material change to visual amenity. This effect would be permanent but **not significant in EIA terms.** |
| **Viewpoint 9:** Two storey residential dwellings situated on Mallards Way within 0.1km south | | | | |
| Residential dwellings | Medium - High | This viewpoint is representative of potential visual effects anticipated at existing residential dwellings south of Gavray Drive (looking northwards towards the application site). The viewpoints are not situated within or look across any designated landscapes, but as residential receptors would have medium (upper floor and front (amenity space) and high visual sensitivity (ground floor and rear amenity space). The surrounding residential areas (Mallwards Way) are situated at a similar topography to the application site.<br><br>The existing two storey residential dwellings have a mixture of orientations with some facing towards the site. The majority or rear amenity spaces are enclosed by existing timber close boarded fences (1.8m height), mature garden landscape planting or direct views to the site are obscured by intervening residential dwellings. There is scope for direct and indirect views towards the site from upper floor residential rooms, but these are filtered by the mature tree components and robust vegetation along the southern site boundary with Gavray Drive.<br><br>The existing tree components along Gavray Drive screen direct views of the railway line (London – to – Birmingham) to the northern site boundary and large scale built form beyond (situated on Charbridge Way).<br><br>Construction activities within the application site would be evident from this location; in | Notwithstanding sensitive design and mitigation, the development of the site will permanently change the character of a small part of the local view. The retention of the existing mature tree components and robust hedgerow along the southern site boundary with Gavray Drive will screen the lower extent of the new built form and ancillary development, whilst the upper building including the roof structure would be discernible albeit filtered by these trees. This effect would diminish in winter and extend in the summer. Mitigation planting at this stage would not have any perceptible effect. The magnitude of change is likely to reduce slightly, but not sufficiently to change the | Despite the absence of detail planting plans, it is envisaged that in the long term maturing vegetation will soften views towards the development from this location.<br><br>Mitigation would reduce the level of change in the longer term as the western boundary becomes denser and the development softens in appearance accordingly; overall the level of change will reduce in such views to low.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Given a low magnitude of change and a high sensitivity, the level of effect at this viewpoint at this time is **minor,** permanent and **not significant in EIA terms.** |

| Receptor | Value | Description of View and Construction Effects | Operational Effects | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | ***At Year 1*** | ***At Year 15*** |
| | | particular the construction of new built form (above the first floor) along the southern boundary of the site. Noise and lighting would be perceptible from this location; although street lighting is already a component of the local view. During the summer months, hoarding is unlikely to have any screening affect at this location as the existing tree components screen the proposed site, although would enhance screening during the winter months.<br><br>As a residential area with some degree of potential direct views towards the site, this location would have medium to high visual sensitivity. With consideration of the orientation and effect of interlying built form and mature landscape features, it is considered that susceptibility to change is medium. The anticipated magnitude of change at this location would be medium i.e. the proposed development will form a new and recognisable element within the view albeit only a minor proportion of the site area.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>The anticipated level of effect at this viewpoint location is **moderate, adverse** short term in nature, reversible and **significant locally in EIA terms.** | level of effect.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>The level of effect at this viewpoint location is **moderate,** adverse, and **significant locally in EIA terms.** | |
| **Viewpoint 10:** PRoW (129/3) within the application site – viewpoint agreed with LPA | | | | |
| Users of PRoW | High | This viewpoint is situated on a public footpath with crosses an open agricultural field which is not within a designated landscape. The viewpoint is situated at a similar topography to the entire application site and the whole site area is visible.<br><br>It is considered that this viewpoint has a high value and a high visual sensitivity; however, the route passes through an urban edge setting with the rail line, embankment and large industrial buildings prominent within the view; therefore, it is unlikely this PRoW would be taken exclusively for the appreciation of the landscape. Therefore it is considered that the viewpoint has a medium visual sensitivity and medium susceptibility to change.<br><br>The view is limited to the east, south and west by mature tree components and robust hedgerow / understorey vegetation, the open arable field lies in the foreground.<br><br>The undertaking of the proposed development would be very evident from this representative viewpoint with the movement of plant, vehicles, workforce, storage of materials and the construction of new built form and ancillary development readily seen.<br><br>It is considered the magnitude of change at this location would be high i.e. the construction of new residential buildings and ancillary development would fundamentally alter the view in the short term. .<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>It is anticipated that the level of effect at this viewpoint location is **major, adverse** short term in nature, reversible and **significant in EIA terms.** | The new development would be visible from Year 1 prior to the establishment of landscape mitigation and ancillary planting. Mitigation planting would not have had sufficient time to afford benefits to overcome the effects of the new development in the first instance.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>The level of effect at this viewpoint location would be reduced from the construction stage to **major – to - moderate, adverse** and would be **significant in EIA terms.** | The appreciation of this view is likely to change as a result of the new development with an obvious view of the new residential buildings and ancillary development. These new features would be recognisable new elements within the view and would be perceived as a new addition to the landscape scene albeit within an already urban setting. This new development would be 'infilling' urban development within the existing parameters of the urban area i.e. Gavray Drive and its residential development and the dominant railway line and industrial units to the north combined with the perception of further urban areas of Bicester to the west of this location. Therefore, the new development would remain to be a recognisable material change to the view and treatment of the existing public footpath influencing visual amenity.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>The level of effect at this viewpoint location would be reduced **to moderate, adverse** and would be **significant in EIA terms.** |
| **Viewpoint 11:** PRoW(129/3) within the site area – viewpoint requested by LPA | | | | |
| Users of PRoW | High | Similar to the previous viewpoint, this viewpoint is situated on a public footpath with crosses an open agricultural field which is not within a designated landscape. The viewpoint is situated at a similar topography to the entire application site and the whole site area is visible.<br><br>It is considered that this viewpoint has a high value and a high visual sensitivity; however, the route passes through an urban edge setting with the rail line, embankment and large industrial buildings prominent within the view; therefore, it is unlikely this PRoW would be taken exclusively for the appreciation of the landscape. Therefore it is considered that the | The new development would be visible from Year 1 prior to the establishment of landscape mitigation and ancillary planting. Mitigation planting would not have had sufficient time to afford benefits to overcome the effects of the new development in the first instance.<br><br>***Significance*** | The appreciation of this view is likely to change as a result of the new development with an obvious view of the new residential buildings and ancillary development. These new features would be recognisable new elements within the view and would be perceived as a new addition to the landscape scene albeit within an already urban setting. This new development would |

| Receptor | Value | Description of View and Construction Effects | Operational Effects | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | ***At Year 1*** | ***At Year 15*** |
| | | viewpoint has a medium visual sensitivity and medium susceptibility to change.<br>This view is situated at the south western corner of the site on the public footpath which runs along an existing hedgerow on south west – north trajectory. The viewpoint is situated at a similar topography to the wider site area i.e. approximately 65mAOD and looks north eastwards.<br>The view is open and wide ranging across the largest of the two field parcels looking north easterly. The view is dominated by the large scale commercial buildings north of the site on Charbridge Way which break the skyline. The railway embankment and railway line partially screen these buildings. Works are currently been undertaken on the railway line and embankment (making the bare earth embankment appear very dominant in the view also).<br>The view is limited to the east, south and west by mature tree components and robust hedgerow / understorey vegetation, the open arable field lies in the foreground.<br>The undertaking of the proposed development would be very evident from this representative viewpoint and along the route of the public footpath. The movement of plant, vehicles, workforce and the storage of materials during the construction phase would be obviously and the construction of new built form and ancillary development readily seen.<br>The magnitude of change at this location would be high i.e. the construction of new residential buildings and ancillary development would fundamentally alter the view in the short term. .<br>***Significance***<br>Given a high magnitude of change and a high sensitivity, the level of effect at this viewpoint location is **major,** short term in nature, reversible and **significant in EIA terms.** | The level of effect at this viewpoint location would be reduced from the construction stage to **major – to - moderate, adverse** and would be **significant in EIA terms.** | be 'infilling' urban development within the existing parameters of the urban area i.e. Gavray Drive and its residential development and the dominant railway line and industrial units to the north combined with the perception of further urban areas of Bicester to the west of this location. Therefore, the new development would remain to be a recognisable material change to the view and treatment of the existing public footpath influencing visual amenity.<br>***Significance***<br>The level of effect at this viewpoint location would be reduced **to moderate, adverse** and would be **significant in EIA terms.** |
| **Viewpoint 12:** Garth Park (public open space), Lauton Road within 0.4km of the site – viewpoint agreed with LPA | | | | |
| Users of Public Open Space | High | This viewpoint is situated on a pedestrian footpath within an official local authority operated public park. It is considered that this viewpoint would have a high value through its use for pleasure and pastime. The viewpoint would have a high sensitivity to visual amenity and a high susceptibility to change within visual amenity.<br>This view is situated within 0.4km west – south west of the site within Garth Park at a similar topography to the site looking north east. The view is dominated by the existing landscape scene of the public park with mature trees and formal hedge and shrub planting. The rooftops of existing residential development (Goldfinch Close) are glimpsed above existing tree groups; therefore, there are no direct views of the site due to inherent screening.<br>It is considered construction activities within the application site would not be discernible during the summer or winter time due to the effect of interlying features and the intervening built form which inherently screens the proposed development. The proposed development has a relatively modest vertical face and as such would not require the erection of cranes which would otherwise break the skyline and be readily seen. Given the interlying distance it is unlikely noise and site lighting would be perceptible.<br>It is considered that the magnitude of change at this location would be negligible / nil.<br>***Significance***<br>It is anticipated that the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **none** during this short term, temporary phase. Therefore, the anticipated effect is **not significant in EIA terms.** | It is considered that the new development would continue to be inherently screened at Year1 and the effect of the new development would be offset.<br>***Significance***<br>Given a negligible / nil magnitude of change the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **none at Year 1**.<br>Therefore, the anticipated effect is **not significant in EIA terms.** | It is considered that after 15 years the interlying landscape features and built form would continue to offset the effect of the new development.<br>***Significance***<br>Given a negligible / nil magnitude of change the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **none at Year 15.**<br>Therefore, the anticipated residual effect is **not significant in EIA terms.** |
| **Viewpoint 13:** Pedestrian railway footbridge (elevated) crossing Oxford – to – Bicester railway – viewpoint agreed with LPA | | | | |
| Users of | Medium | This view is to the west – south west within less than 0.2km of the site situated on a railway | At Year 1 the effect of the construction | Despite the absence of detail planting |

| Receptor | Value | Description of View and Construction Effects | Operational Effects | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | ***At Year 1*** | ***At Year 15*** |
| pedestrian railway bridge | | footbridge which crosses the Oxford – to – Bicester railway line. This pedestrian footbridge is estimated to be 10 metres above the existing ground level affording an open view of the railway line. The existing two residential developments south west of Gavray Drive (Whimbrel Close) is readily seen as well as recently completed residences (Jubilee Way) and the Child's First day Nursery. The railway dissects a relatively dense urban scene. The tree group along southern site boundary with Gavray Drive is discernible beyond Whimbrel Close.<br><br>Given the elevated viewpoint position it is inevitable that some construction activities within the application site are likely to be perceived from this location; for instance, the construction of new residential dwellings would probably be visible from the western edge of the site albeit only a minor area of the site. There is potential for some of the wider site area to be visible during the winter months (through leaf loss), but the intervening built form would screen a significant area and only the rooflines might be visible in the worse case scenario (although existing trees along Gavray Drive would filter).<br><br>As a relatively busy pedestrian railway footbridge this location has a relatively medium value and given the transient nature of the visual receptors, the susceptibility to change is considered to be low. Combined, the result is an overall sensitivity of medium and the likely magnitude of change is anticipated to be very low when the application site is seen in the wider urban area of Bicester which is appreciable from this elevated viewpoint.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Given a low magnitude of change and a medium sensitivity, the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **minor, adverse** short term in nature, reversible and **not significant in EIA terms.** | phase would cease. In the worse case scenario the new development would be visible from Year 1 prior to the establishment of landscape mitigation and ancillary planting. It is considered that this visibility would be limited to only the upper roof lines of those new dwellings situated to the south western site area, with the wider area and lower ancillary development inherently screened by robust vegetation along Gavray Drive and the intervening built form i.e. Whimbrel Close.<br><br>Mitigation planting would not have had sufficient time to afford benefits to overcome the effects of the new development in the first instance; therefore, the magnitude of change is likely to reduce from the construction phase but not substantially (given the elevated position of the viewpoint / railway bridge).<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>The level of effect at this viewpoint location is **minor, adverse** temporary and **not significant in EIA terms.** | plans, it is envisaged that in the long term maturing landscape mitigation planting will further filter views towards the development from this location.<br><br>At Year 15, it is considered that the new development would to a lesser extent be recognisable new elements within the view and would be perceived as a new addition to the landscape scene albeit within an already urban setting. This new development would be 'infilling' urban development within the existing parameters of the urban area i.e. railway line and bridge, existing residential built form and commercial development along Lauton Road which are all represented in the urban scene from this viewpoint.<br><br>Therefore, the new development would remain a new element (albeit softening through mitigation and ancillary planting); the development would not represent a recognisable material change to the view. Visual amenity would be influenced but only by 'infilling' the existing urban area which would not be significant and may possibly not be detectable by the casual observer.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>The level of effect at this viewpoint location would reduce **negligible, adverse,** permanent and **not significant in EIA terms.** |
| **Viewpoint 14**: Lauton Road residential dwellings / commercial facilities situated within 0.1km of the site – viewpoint agreed with LPA | | | | |
| Users of vehicular route and residential receptors along route | Low - High | The view is situated on a public vehicle route to the north west of the site at a similar topography i.e. 65mAOD. The view looks south east towards the site and is dominated by the large scale buildings (retail outlets) with customer car parking on Lauton Road. The skyline is broken a number of features including these building, ancillary corporate signage and lighting columns situated in the car parking area and along Lauton Road. These building back on to the Oxford – to – Bicester railway line which runs behind these structures and the timber close boarded fence (acoustic) to the car parking space. Beyond this there are glimpsed views of the construction equipment operating on the western part of the site in conjunction with the railway line and embankment works which are currently ongoing. The existing groups of mature trees along the southern site boundary with Gavray Drive are discernible above the acoustic fence.<br><br>Given the close range distance to the application site, it is inevitable that construction activities within the application site would be evident from this location. For instance, the erection of new built form (above the first floor) along the western boundary of the site. Noise and lighting would be perceptible from this location; although lighting to Lauton Road and the retail car parking is already a component of the view. These effects would be temporary and short term in duration.<br><br>As a relatively busy public vehicle route this location has a relatively low value and given the transient nature of the visual receptors, the susceptibility to change is considered to be low. | As in the current situation, from Year 1 the majority of the new development would continue to be effectively screened by the interlying built form and acoustic fence, although aspects of the development along the western boundary would be recognisable. These new elements would be of a smaller scale than the existing buildings within the foreground. It is unlikely mitigation planting would afford benefit to the development at Year 1.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>Given a low magnitude of change the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **minor at Year 1**. Therefore, the anticipated effect is **not significant in EIA terms.** | Despite the absence of detail planting plans, it is envisaged that in the long term maturing landscape mitigation planting will further filter views towards the development from this location.<br><br>It is considered that where the new development would be visible, its significance would be less detectable within the urban setting of this scene.<br><br>***Significance***<br><br>The level of effect at this viewpoint location would reduce **to very minor, adverse,** permanent and **not significant** in EIA terms. |

| Receptor | Value | Description of View and Construction Effects | Operational Effects | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | *At Year 1* | *At Year 15* |
| | | Combined, he result is an overall sensitivity of medium. Therefore, the magnitude of change at this location would be very low.<br>***Significance***<br>Given a low magnitude of change and a medium sensitivity, the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **minor,** short term in nature, reversible and **not significant in EIA terms.** | | |
| **Viewpoint 15:** PRoW situated less than 3km north west of the site – viewpoint agreed with LPA | | | | |
| Users of PRoW | High | This view is situated on a public bridleway which does not look across any designated landscape areas; therefore it is considered that the viewpoint would have a high value and high sensitivity to visual amenity. It is anticipated the viewpoint would have a high susceptibility to visual amenity.<br>This view is situated less than 3km to the north west looking south east towards the site at an elevated topography of approximately 95mAOD affording a wide view of open agricultural fields limited by robust hedgerows.<br>The view is dominated by the broad open skyline with mature tree components below. The view is limited by the existing railway embankment (London – to – Birmingham rail line) with mature vegetation which is elevated above the position of the view. This earthwork embankment and the interlying mature landscape features and built form on the eastern urban edge of Bicester. The magnitude of change at this location would be nil.<br>***Significance***<br>It is anticipated that he level of effect on this viewpoint is **none, adverse** during this short term, temporary phase which is **not significant in EIA terms.** | As in the current situation, from Year 1 the new development would continue to be inherently screened.<br>***Significance***<br>Given a negligible / nil magnitude of change the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **none at Year 1**. Therefore, the anticipated effect is **not significant in EIA terms.** | As in the current situation, from Year 1 the new development would continue to be inherently screened.<br>***Significance***<br>Given a negligible / nil magnitude of change the level of effect on this viewpoint location is **none at Year 15**. Therefore, the anticipated effect is **not significant in EIA terms.** |

**Table 8.9**: Residential Visual Amenity Schedule of Effects during Construction and Operation

| Receptor | Value | Description of View and Construction Effects | Operational Effects | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | ***At Year 1*** | ***At Year 15*** |
| **Group A:**<br>**Residential areas to the south of Gavray Drive**<br>**(see View 6,7 & 8)** | Medium - High | This group comprises properties with view towards the application from residences south of Gavray Drive including Mallards Way and neighbouring cul-de-sac areas. This group is situated within 0.1km of the site (at its closest point) and occupies similar topography to the site i.e. 65mAOD.<br>Most ground floor views are screened by garden fences and landscape planting within rear and front amenity, as well as existing mature groups of trees lining the southern aspect of Gavray Drive. Additionally, the southern site boundary is enclosed by further groups of mature trees and robust hedgerow / understorey vegetation.<br>This group include residences on residential roads feeding out from Mallards Way which are arranged in cul-de-sacs including Redwings Close and The Bramblings which have a mixture of orientation including some which face directly towards the site but whose views are restricted or limited due to the above factors.<br>Receptors will experience potentially close proximity views of construction activity primarily from generally south-facing rear or side windows of properties especially where they are located closest to Gavray Drive. For instance; dwellings situated on Whimbrel Drive, The Bramblings and Redwing Close.<br>Views of construction activities would also include site lighting, however, there are street lighting columns situated on Gavray Drive. External lighting is not normally absent from the view along Gavrey Drive and therefore, external lighting would not be potentially intrusive during the construction phase.<br>Where views are obtained, there will be a high magnitude of change.<br>Views from these properties have a generally high value, but it cannot be possible to determine the use of rooms that do have a view; views of construction activities within the proposed development may be available from upstairs rooms including bedrooms. Considering the nature of existing views from these properties (predominantly screened or filtered through mature trees and across a public roadway with external lighting), the overall sensitivity is medium.<br>***Significance***<br>Given a medium magnitude of change to views of high sensitivity, the level of effect at construction stage would be **moderate, adverse** short term in nature, reversible and **significant in EIA terms.** | As in the current situation, at Year 1, it is considered that the new development would to a lesser extent be recognisable new elements within the view and would be perceived as a new addition to the scene (where visible) albeit within an already urban setting. This new development would be 'infilling' urban development within the existing parameters of the urban area. Therefore, the new development would remain a new element (albeit softening through mitigation and ancillary planting) but would not represent a fundamental change to visual amenity which is already influenced by urban form i.e. railway line, existing residential built form, vehicular routes and the perception of wider residential development west of this location in Bicester.<br>The benefit of mitigation planting and ancillary landscaping within the new development is unlikely to provide any significant benefit at Year 1.<br>***Significance***<br>Given a medium magnitude of change to views of high sensitivity, the level of effect at Year 1 would be diminishing from earlier to **minor, adverse**, and **significant in EIA terms.** | Subject to the establishment and maturation of mitigation planting and ancillary landscaping within the new development, some views would increasingly become screened or fragmented such that the magnitude of change would reduce and screening increase. However, upper storey views are likely to remain (where possible) albeit reduced through maturity of mitigation measures.<br>***Significance***<br>The residual effect at Year 15 year would be **minor, adverse** significant (where views are possible**)**, **but not significant in EIA terms.**<br>In some instances, the level of effect may be less i.e. negligible, adverse – to – none where views are significantly screened or not possible from upstairs residential rooms. In these situations, by Year 15 the level of inherent and mature mitigation planting would be sufficient to be effective, even during winter. |
| **Group B:**<br>**Residential Areas immediately West of the Oxford - to - Bicester railway line**<br>**(see View 12 & 13)** | Medium – High | This group includes urban area of Bicester including Lauton Road and neighbouring residential streets; for instance, Longfield Road and Victoria Road situated within close range to the west of the application on similar topography i.e. 65mAOD.<br>This group is predominantly 2 storey dwellings with a mixture of orientations including direct and non-direct positions. Direct views from these dwellings are screened from ground residential rooms by interlying mature trees with Garth Park, along Lauton Road and within intervening front and rear amenity spaces. Views are also limited by intervening built form; for instance, residential dwellings, industrial units and retail outlets on Lauton Road.<br>Direct views may be afforded from upper floor residential rooms including bedrooms and bathrooms (which are largely not used during daylight hours) but it is considered views may be restricted for similar reasons along Lauton Road.<br>During the construction phase it is anticipated that direct views would be minimal (if at all possible). The relatively modest vertical face of the proposed built form would not exceed the surrounding building heights (and less than the commercial buildings along Lauton Road) effectively screening the application site.<br>It is unlikely the construction phase would require the employment of a crane which would otherwise break the skyline, whilst the intervening Lauton Road has existing street lighting | Views of new housing within the proposed development would be extremely limited, and where possible, would be mostly limited to rooftops. Where views of the proposed development are possible, they would be set within the context of existing urban setting.<br>The new development would 'infill' an area of the urban environment which is limited most significantly by the railway lines. Therefore, the new development would not be extending new urban built form in the wider rural environment which would otherwise appear incongruous. It is considered that to most casual observers, there would not be an obvious addition to the view.<br>***Significance*** | In the long term the new development would have no significant incongruous effect within this existing urban area, which the maturity of existing trees and proposed mitigation and ancillary planting would further enable.<br>Therefore, the new development would remain a new element (albeit softening through mitigation and ancillary planting); the development would not represent a recognisable material change to the view. Visual amenity would be influenced but only by 'infilling' the existing urban area which would not be significant and may possibly not be detectable by the casual observer.<br>***Significance***<br>Given a low magnitude of change to views of high sensitivity, the level of effect at |

| Receptor | Value | Description of View and Construction Effects | Operational Effects | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | *At Year 1* | *At Year 15* |
| | | columns and also carries regular traffic flow, whilst the railway line is intervening. Therefore, it is considered the perceived effects of construction would not be intrusive and would be offset.<br>Where views are obtained, there will be a low magnitude of change but would have a generally high value (if possible) which are most likely to include upstairs rooms such as bedrooms and bathrooms. Considering the nature of existing views from these properties (predominantly screened or filtered inherently), the overall sensitivity is medium – high.<br>***Significance***<br>Given a low magnitude of change to views of medium - high sensitivity, the level of effect at construction stage would be **minor – negligible, adverse** (where possible). These visual effects would be short term in nature, reversible and **not significant in EIA terms.** | Given a low magnitude of change to views of high sensitivity, the level of effect at Year 1 would be negligible, adverse – none. These effects would be permanent but **not significant in EIA terms.** | Year 1 would be negligible, adverse – none. These effects would be permanent but **not significant in EIA terms.** |
| **Group C:**<br>**The remainder of residential areas within Bicester**<br>**(see View 14 & 15)** | Medium – High | This group includes the remainder of Bicester urban and suburban areas constituting residential streets to the north, south and west. For instance, areas of Woodfield (north – north west), Bicester town centre (further south – south west) and Highfield (west). These areas have a similar topography to the site i.e. approximately 65mAOD, except for the western suburban areas through Highfield (rising towards 85mAOD).<br>Given the modest elevation of this built form and the influence of the railway embankment north of the site which continues north westerly through Bicester, direct views of the site are not anticipated from residential areas to the north and north west neighbourhoods i.e. Woodfield. Neighbourhoods to the south west and south including the town centres have a predominantly modest building height with no high rise apartment blocks. These views have a medium to high value but are limited by neighbouring buildings, urban trees and other features of the urban landscape.<br>This intervening context is likely to offset any effects from the construction phase including lighting, noise and dust. Given the nature of views (i.e. urban) the susceptibility to change would be low – very low with a high to medium sensitivity.<br>***Significance***<br>The level of effect at construction stage would be **negligible - none,** short term in nature, reversible and **not significant in EIA terms.** | Views of new housing within the proposed development would be extremely limited, if not non-existent. In the worse case scenario, views would be glimpsed (if views are possible) mainly of rooftops to new residential built form. This new element within the view would be extending the urban area of Bicester, but in to the strong parameters of the urban area defined by the railway tracks and railway embankment and A4421 Charbridge Road. Therefore, the new development does not extend incongruously in to the wider urban – rural edge of east Bicester and is well contained within the current urban context.<br>***Significance***<br>The level of effect at Year 1 would remain **negligible - none**, adverse, permanent and **not significant in EIA terms.** | Screening by maturing planting is not likely to have an appreciable effect on the magnitude of change on these locations with Group C. In the long term the new development would be seen through glimpsed views (if at all) but would remain holistically contained within the existing urban setting. The level of effect remains **negligible - none,** adverse, permanent and **not significant in EIA terms.** |
| **Group D:**<br>**Satellite villages north – east of Bicester**<br>**(see View 3 & 4)** | Very High | Outside of the urban area of Bicester are a number of small villages, hamlets and isolated dwellings / farmsteads. These residences and settlements are situated to the north east and east of Bicester; for instance, Straton Audley (3.5km north east) and Lauton (1.25km east). And occupy similar topography to the application site i.e. Lauton at approximately 65mAOD and Straton Audely is approximately 75- 80mAOD.<br>Direct visibility of the application site from these settlements is largely screened by the intervening built form (within these villages and along the eastern edge of Bicester at Charbridge Road (A4421)), mature landscape features and the elevated railway embankment (London – to – Birmingham rail link). These physical elements inherently screen the application site currently, and it is considered these features would offset effects of the construction phase including noise and light.<br>Within these settlements and residences it is considered that the levels of susceptibility to change in visual amenity would be low – to none. Overall, a high to medium sensitivity is derived from medium to high value receptors.<br>**Significance**<br>Given a low to none appreciable magnitude of change it is unlikely the effects of construction would be discernible or perceived. Therefore it is anticipated effects would be **none during the** short term and **not significant in EIA terms.** | It is anticipated the same level of inherent mitigation would be afforded the new development on occupation. At this time the effects of construction would also have ceased.<br>***Significance***<br>The level of effect at Year 1 would be **none, permanent and not significant in EIA terms**. It is anticipated there would be no appreciable view of the new development through inherent mitigation. | It is anticipated the same level of inherent mitigation would be afforded the new development on occupation. At this time the effects of construction would also have ceased.<br>***Significance***<br>The level of effect at Year 15 would be **none, permanent and not significant in EIA terms.** It is anticipated there would be no appreciable view of the new development through inherent mitigation. |

| Receptor | Value | Description of View and Construction Effects | Operational Effects | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | ***At Year 1*** | ***At Year 15*** |
| **Group E:**<br>**Isolated individual or small groups of Dwellings outside of Bicester**<br>**(see View 1 & 2)** | Very High | This group includes individual residences /farms within the wider assessment survey area; for instance, residences to the south around Graven Hill, Middleton Stoney and Bucknell. These areas are generally within the ZTV.<br>From a through field assessment it is considered that the intervening topography limits views of the application site. However, where topography does not screen views of the application site inherent mitigation is afforded by interlying woodland, mature tree groups, hedgerows or the effect of the railway embankment (London – to – Birmingham rail line).<br>Although these potential visual receptors would have a medium to high sensitivity, it is anticipated that the construction activities would not be evident in any views obtained from this group.<br>***Significance***<br>Given a low – none magnitude of change to views the level of effect at construction stage would be **none** during this short term period. Therefore these effects are **not significant in EIA terms.** In the majority of cases, however, no view would be recorded. | It is anticipated the same level of inherent mitigation would be afforded the new development on occupation. At this time the effects of construction would also have ceased.<br>***Significance***<br>The level of effect at Year 1 would be **none, permanent and not significant in EIA terms**. It is anticipated there would be no appreciable view of the new development through inherent mitigation. | It is anticipated the same level of inherent mitigation would be afforded the new development on occupation. At this time the effects of construction would also have ceased.<br>***Significance***<br>The level of effect at Year 15 would be **none, permanent and not significant in EIA terms.** It is anticipated there would be no appreciable view of the new development through inherent mitigation. |