LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY

PREAMBLE

The Landscape Character Assessment has been based on the disposition and nature of land uses set out on Figure 4.1 Parameter Plan D.0358_04 Revision, as presented in the Environmental Statement, 2016 (ES 2016). Figure 4.1 of the ES 2016 is superseded by Figure 4.1 Parameter Plan D.0358_04 Revision N, as presented in this SEI. The revised development Parameter Plan incorporates minor amendments made to the proposed development following consultee responses to planning application 16/02446/F, that include:

- Reduction in the proposed extent and number of 3-storey properties;
- Introduction of a dedicated bridleway for users of the Port Way;
- Revised locations of the proposed play areas;
- Revisions to the proposed water attenuation area(s); and
- Revisions to the scheme of landscape proposals.

The detailed layout and disposition of the residential dwellings and vehicular access/circulation have been amended but continues to be in accordance with the original Parameter Plan. Further, the location, extent, and uses proposed for the Green Infrastructure corridors remains in accordance with the original Parameter Plan, although the bridleway is introduced.

The potential for these minor amendments to influence the findings of the Landscape and Visual Amenity assessment as reported in the ES 2016 includes:

- Reduction in the number of 3-storey properties by limiting these taller buildings close to the centre and northeast boundary of the site, away from the most sensitive western and southern boundary, thus reducing the potential extent upon which they may exert a landscape and visual influence on the surrounding landscape and receptors;
- The new bridleway would comprise a grassed route within, and in keeping with, the character and uses of the Green Infrastructure buffer, and would present amenity benefits for equestrian and pedestrian users of the Port Way PROW by providing an alternative, more attractive and safer, off-road route;
- A retained footway along the northern edge of the Application Site would be widened to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists;
- A number of the proposed play areas would be provided albeit that
 these have been rationalised, which enables a Local Equipped Area of
 Play (LEAP) to be located centrally within the Application Site thus
 reducing the number of Local Areas of Play required. A Neighbourhood
 Equipped Area of Play (NEAP) will be provided in proximity to the
 attenuation basin/pond, as previously proposed. Trim Trail equipment
 would be provided along the western and southern boundaries, within
 the Green Infrastructure buffer;
- The proposed water attenuation basin would remain within the Green Infrastructure buffer in broadly the same location as previously proposed, albeit that it would occupy a larger, shallower extent; and
- Proposed Green Infrastructure corridors would continue to be provided along the site boundaries and along the principal vehicular routes, existing hedgerow and trees would be retained along the western boundary (although one established tree would be removed), and new

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tree planting is proposed throughout the Application Site and along the western and southern boundaries in particular.

The magnitude of change and subsequent significance of effects arising from these amendments in terms of landscape character, landscape elements and visual impacts assessments reported in ES 2016 is negligible. Therefore, no substantive changes arise and the findings of the landscape and visual appraisal with respect to construction and operational effects as reported in the ES 2016 remain valid and unchanged.

The reduction and limited extent of the proposed 3 storey properties, together with the provision of a bridleway, represents mitigation of potential adverse effects and/or enhancement and therefore section 11.5 Mitigation and Enhancement of the ES 2016 is reproduced and updated accordingly below.

As described in the Preamble to the SEI, the cumulative context of the Proposed Development has changed from that which was assessed and reported in the ES 2016 due to the submission of Heyford Masterplan planning application. For ease of reference and reading, the following paragraphs therefore wholly replace ES 2016 sections 11.5 Mitigation and Enhancement and 11.6 Cumulative and Incombination Effects. No additional information is required as part of this SEI to support Chapter 11 of the ES.

11.5 MITIGATION AND ENHANCEMENT

Mitigation by Design

- 11.5.1 Over time the proposed planting indicated on the Parameter Plan (see Figure 4.1) would help to screen and filter views from the surrounding landscape, particularly in views from the south. The proposed planting consists of a loose belt of trees and informal groups of trees and shrubs arranged along the northern, southern and western boundaries and within the Application Site itself along green corridors, helping to integrate the Proposed Development with the proposed and existing landscape framework, replicating the settlement boundaries found elsewhere in the immediate area.
- 11.5.2 The extent of 3-storey buildings proposed within the development has been reduced following consultee responses to the planning application. Three storey buildings are therefore limited to the central area of the site and the northeast corner only, restricting potential effects upon landscape and visual receptors to the west and southwest of the Application Site including Upper Heyford village, Rousham Conservation Area, the Listed Rousham House and Garden, and locally occurring roads and PROW.
- 11.5.3 Landscape elements and features, including topsoil, that have been identified as being retained will be appropriately protected throughout the construction phase to ensure long-term viability for re-use with regard to the best practice current at that time. Trees to be retained will be protected in accordance with the Arboricultural Impact Assessment which is a standalone report that accompanies the planning application.

Additional Mitigation

11.5.4 During the construction phase of the Proposed Development, consideration will be given to appropriate positioning of construction compounds to limit or reduce their visibility from the surrounding areas. The southern and south western part of the Application Site appear to be more sensitive in visual terms due to the limited amount of tree vegetation; the eastern boundary is more sensitive due to its proximity to residential properties (Bovis Homes) and the new school.

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- 11.5.5 Site hoarding will be used to reduce or remove sight of the works from nearby receptors. This would be most effective along the Camp Road footway and the eastern boundary of the Application Site, and possibly the southern boundary. The perception of movement and clutter within the Application Site would be reduced but the overall effects would remain unchanged due to proximity.
- 11.5.6 Consideration will be given to the materials and colour palette used for the Proposed Development to reduce its visual prominence and help to integrate it into the landscape. The residential properties recently constructed by Bovis are easily identifiable within the views gained from PROW and the B4030 located to the south due to their relatively light colours. In contrast the existing built form within the Application Site, which is characterised by dull off-white and dark brick colours is less visible and blends in with the surrounding vegetation. Such mitigation measures implemented along with the proposed planting are likely to reduce the visual effects upon the PROW and road receptors in the vicinity of the Application Site and residential receptors to the west and southwest. Such mitigation measures would have a limited effect upon the close range views where the effects are determined by the scale and height of the Proposed Development. Conversely, the replacement of derelict structures and neglected site with high quality built form and Green Infrastructure will have a positive effect on close range views.
- 11.5.7 The proposed planting along the southern boundary of the Application Site would help to assimilate the Proposed Development into the overall panorama. In some instances, such mitigation would with time lower the previously assessed effects from major to moderate (or less) as the vegetation develops, particularly as perceived by receptors travelling along certain PROW and along Kirtlington Road/Port Way, near the south west corner of the Application Site.

Enhancements

- 11.5.8 A selection of appropriate plant species is proposed with the focus on native plants and/or plants that fulfil a specific function. Consideration is also given to the arrangement of trees in the southern part of the Application Site to provide a high quality designed open space offering views of the surrounding open countryside whilst restricting views of the Proposed Development.
- 11.5.9 Appropriate play space/equipment and a fitness equipment trail would be provided along the western and southern boundaries of the Application Site, with access provided by a network of new pedestrian routes.

Provision of a public bridleway parallel to the western boundary of the Application Site would provide enhancement and minor benefits to users of the Port Way (Kirtlington Road) PROW by offering a safer, off-road route, whilst continuing to contribute to the overall Green Infrastructure strategy. The northern footway would also be widened to form a combined cycle/footway.

11.6 CUMULATIVE AND IN-COMBINATION EFFECTS

11.6.1 Chapter 2 of the ES sets out the basis for the assessment of cumulative and incombination effects. With respect to landscape and visual matters, cumulative effects arise where the visibility of other proposals overlaps with that of the Proposed Development to incur an incremental effect. Cumulative effects relate to landscape character and visual amenity. Within cumulative assessment, the proposals may be viewed in combination, in succession, or sequentially.

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A location plan showing the cumulative development sites to be assessed are set out on ES Figure 2.1. For the LVIA, the cumulative sites have been geographically grouped according to distance, orientation and proposed land use and are summarised as follows:

Group A: Within or Close to Heyford Park:

- Village Centre North, Heyford (Application 17/00895/F);
- Heyford Masterplan, Upper Heyford (Application 18/00825/HYBRID);
- Pye Homes, Upper Heyford (Application 15/01357/F); and
- Parcel 15, Heyford Park Masterplan.

Group B: Within or Close to Bicester:

- North West Bicester (Application 10/01780/Hybrid (Exemplar/Elmsbury));
- North West Bicester (Application 14/01384/OUT Application 1);
- North West Bicester (Application 14/01641/OUT Application 2);
- North West Bicester (Application 14/02121/OUT Himley Village);
- Land at Whitelands Farm, Kingsmere (Application 06/00967/OUT)
- Network Bicester (Application 14/01675/OUT; and
- Bicester Gateway 16/02505/OUT.

Landscape Elements

Topography, Land Form and Drainage

11.6.2 It is envisaged that effects upon topography, land form and drainage would be mitigated by each cumulative development as part of the planning application and Reserved Matters applications. Notwithstanding, the effects upon such landscape elements would be very localised and cumulative effects resulting from construction of the cumulative sites would be no more than negligible. No further effects upon topography and land form would occur during operation of the cumulative sites. However, the construction of surface level SUDS infrastructure would create new landscape (and ecological) features leading to minor beneficial effects.

Land Use, Built Form and Infrastructure

11.6.3 Two of the Group A cumulative sites, Heyford Masterplan and Village Centre North fall within the former Air Base and would require demolition of various buildings and structures to enable construction of the proposed development. The former lies largely to the north of Camp Road, northeast of the Application Site, and the latter falls within the Technical Area to the east of the Application Site and is separated from it by Bovis Homes and Heyford School developments. Collectively, the magnitude of change upon land use and built form arising from demolition of these structures is tempered by their immediate built context and, the derelict condition of the structures within the Application Site. Pye Homes and Parcel 15 sites lie adjacent to and would be in keeping with the former Air Base and ongoing Heyford Park development.

11.6.4 The Group A sites would each deliver land uses that complement Heyford Park and the Proposed Development through high quality development and built form; overall the magnitude of change and effects arising from Group A sites would be negligible.

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The Group B sites would not be experienced in the context of built form, land use and infrastructure of the Application Site.

Green Infrastructure

11.6.5 Effects upon existing vegetation, open space and PROW would be minimised and mitigated by each cumulative development (Group A and Group B sites), and cohesive Green Infrastructure strategies would be delivered as part of the planning applications and Reserved Matters applications. Notwithstanding, the effects upon such landscape elements would be very localised and cumulative effects resulting from construction of the cumulative sites would be no more than negligible.

Landscape Character

Farmland Plateau LCA

11.6.6 Each of the Group A cumulative sites falls within the Farmland Plateau LCA and therefore they have the potential for creating additional direct and perceptual effects in cumulation with the Proposed Development. However, Village Centre North and Heyford Masterplan sites fall wholly or largely within, and Parcel 15 and Pye Homes site are contiguous with, the former Air Base boundary. Whilst they have the potential to influence the qualities of this LCA, they would be 'read' as part of the former Air Base which is synonymous with the Heyford Park development and so negligible effects would accrue. Accordingly, the significance of cumulative effects upon the Farmland Plateau LCA from construction or operation of the Proposed Development in combination with the Group A sites would be negligible.

11.6.7 The Group B sites lie to the east and southeast of the Farmland Plateau LCA boundary and are separated visually and physically from it by the Wooded Estatelands LCA, and so it would not influence the perceptual qualities of this landscape. Accordingly, no cumulative effects would arise.

Upper Heyford Plateau LCA

11.6.8 The Group A cumulative sites fall within the Upper Heyford Plateau LCA and therefore they have the potential for creating additional direct and perceptual effects in cumulation with the Proposed Development. However, Heyford Masterplan and Village Centre North fall within, and Parcel 15 and Pye Homes site are contiguous with, the former Air Base boundary. Whilst they have the potential to influence the qualities of this LCA, they would be 'read' as part of the former Air Base and Heyford Park so negligible effects would accrue. Accordingly, the significance of direct cumulative effects upon the Upper Heyford Plateau LCA from construction or operation of the Proposed Development in combination with the Group A sites would be negligible.

11.6.9 The Group B sites lie to the east and southeast of the Upper Heyford Plateau LCA boundary and is separated visually and physically from it by the Wooded Estatelands LCA, and so there would be no cumulative effects.

Cherwell Valley LCA

- 11.6.10 None of the identified cumulative developments are within this LCA therefore any effects would be limited to the perceptual qualities of this landscape.
- 11.6.11 The Group A sites lie within the neighbouring Farmland Plateau LCA and so would have no direct effect upon the Cherwell Valley LCA. Village Centre North, Parcel 15 and Pye Homes lie within or would be physically separated from this LCA by existing Heyford Park development so would not lead to any cumulative perceptual effects. The Heyford Masterplan site lies within the boundary of the former Air Base and would replace existing underused structures and land. The Application Site may potentially be seen in addition to Heyford Masterplan development parcels 16, 32W and 34 when viewed from the Cherwell

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Valley, but the significance of indirect cumulative effects upon the Cherwell Valley LCA in the context of Heyford Park and the former Air Base would be negligible during construction, Year 1 and Year 15 operation.

11.6.12 The Group B sites lie approximately 7km to the east and southeast of the Cherwell Valley LCA boundary and would not influence the perceptual qualities of this landscape and so no cumulative effects would arise.

Other LCA's

11.6.13 As mentioned at paragraph 11.3.40 of ES 2016, other LCA's which fall within the 5km study area are not notably affected by the Proposed Development. Accordingly, the Proposed Development would not contribute to cumulative effects upon other LCA's and so they have been excluded from the assessment.

Night Time Character

- 11.6.14 The Application Site and Group A cumulative sites fall within or are contiguous with the former Air Base boundary. Whilst Group A sites have the potential to influence night time character, the additional light levels would be indistinguishable being 'read' as part of the former Air Base which is synonymous with the Heyford Park development. It is assumed for the purposes of this assessment that the Group A sites would be subject to comparable design and environmental controls as the Proposed Development, thus minimising sky glow and light spillage. Accordingly, negligible additional or in-combination Group A effects would accrue and the significance of cumulative effects upon the Upper Heyford Plateau LCA from construction or operation of the Proposed Development would be negligible.
- 11.6.15 The Group B sites are physically separated from the Proposed Development on the urban edge of Bicester and so would not influence the night-time character of the Application Site.

Visual Receptors

- 11.6.16 The previous assessments concluded that only close range receptors would potentially gain views of the Proposed Development and other cumulative developments. Those travelling along the local public footpaths and roads would experience some change in their views. It is likely that such magnitude of change would be medium to high depending on the location. The effects would be major and significant for the both types of receptors, diminishing to moderate and significant for the road users.
- 11.6.17 The visual receptors at medium to long distance views of the cumulative developments will experience less of an effect than the close range receptors. The effects at these medium to long distance views will be of a similar level as those experienced in the construction phase.

Viewpoints

- 11.6.18 Appendix **11.3** of ES 2016 provides a detailed viewpoint assessment supported by the photoviews prepared for each viewpoint. This assessment has been used to review the potential for cumulative effects during the construction stage, which is summarised below.
- 11.6.19 The arrangement of proposed Heyford Masterplan land uses is set out on the Heyford Park Composite Parameters Plan which identifies 26 development parcels or sub parcels that have been considered in relation to the Application Site and the potential to give rise to cumulative visual effects as experienced from each of the 15 representative viewpoints.

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- 11.6.20 The visual assessment has shown that whilst cumulative parcels may be theoretically visible in combination with the Proposed Development, in reality for Viewpoints 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10 and 14 the cumulative effects would be negligible or negligible (no change) due to topography, intervening buildings (and in some instances proposed buildings on the Heyford Park Composite Parameter Plan development parcels) or intervening vegetation or a combination thereof.
- 11.6.21 Viewpoint 7 would experience negligible and /or negligible (no change) for all cumulative sites except Heyford Masterplan parcels 16, 18, 32 (west) and 34 (west). Due to the proximity and orientation of view, Viewpoint 7 would experience a high magnitude of change arising from the implementation of parcel 16 in its own right, with development on the Application Site within the former Air Base further contributing to this effect, leading to a major significance of effect.
- 11.6.22 Viewpoint 8, and to a lesser extent Viewpoint 11, would experience negligible significance of effect in relation to all cumulative sites except parcel 10 and possibly taller structures in the vicinity of the Village Centre. The transformation of the Application Site and parcel 10 from existing brownfield uses to high quality residential developments would have a major beneficial significance of effect upon Viewpoints 8 and 11.
- 11.6.23 The Proposed Development would be seen in combination with the upper parts of development on Heyford Masterplan parcels 16, 18, 32 (west) and 34 (west) as experienced from Viewpoint 12, resulting in moderate adverse significance of effects at Year 1. However, this effect would diminish to moderate or less as proposed landscape buffer planting proposed along the edges of the Application Site and as part of the Heyford Masterplan Sports Park (parcel 18) matures. No other cumulative sites would be visible from this viewpoint, resulting in negligible (no change) effect.
- 11.6.24 Development upon parcel 16 would obscure views toward the Proposed Development when seen from Viewpoint 13, thus resulting in a neutral to negligible (no change) residual effect.
- 11.6.25 Due to their location and proximity to the former Air Base, Viewpoints 14 and 15 would potentially gain sequential views of the Proposed Development and Heyford Masterplan parcels 16 and 17, resulting in a minor effect. Views of parcel 18 would be screened by existing landform and hedgerows at year 1 and by proposed landscape buffer planting proposed as part of the Heyford Masterplan parcels 16 and 18 development by year 15.
- 11.6.26 There would be no intervisibility between any of the existing or proposed representative Viewpoints and Group B sites due to distance and intervening landscape elements, and so no cumulative effects would arise.

Summary of Cumulative Effects

- 11.6.27 In summary, the effects upon landscape character arising from construction and operation of the Proposed Development and cumulative development sites within or adjacent to the former Air Base would be negligible in the context of existing Heyford Park and former military features.
- 11.6.28 The potential for cumulative visual effects to arise between the Proposed Development and the cumulative schemes as set out on Heyford Masterplan, Village Centre North, Pye Homes and Parcel 15 varies according to juxtaposition, distance, orientation and the relative elevation of viewpoint and the presence and scale of intervening buildings and vegetation buildings (and in some instances proposed buildings within the cumulative sites).

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11.6.29 Cumulative sites in proximity to the Application Site and/or those south of Camp Road are likely to give rise to the most notable effects upon the representative viewpoints that lie within close range.

11.6.30 **Table 11.2** below, provides a summary of cumulative effects and is to be read in conjunction with ES 2016 Table 11.2 with respect to construction and operational effects.

Table 11.2: Summary of Effects, Mitigation and Residual Effects.

Receptor / Receiving Environment	Description of Effect	Nature of Effect	Sensitivity Value	Magnitude of Effect	Geographical Importance	Significance of Effects	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures	Residual Effects
Cumulative Ef	fects							
Farmland Plateau LCA	Proposed Development increasing the density of development but contained within the established boundaries of the former Air Base and Policy Villages 5	Permanent	Medium (overall) Low (around the Application Site)	Low Positive	Local	Negligible	~	Negligible
Upper Heyford Plateau LCA	Proposed Development increasing the density of development but contained within the established boundaries of the former Air Base and Policy Villages 5	Permanent	Low (around the Application Site)	Negligible	Local	Negligible	~	Negligible

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Cherwell Valley LCA	Proposed Development seen against other cumulative sites or in isolation with little change to the overall composition of the view	Permanent	High	Negligible	Local	Negligible	~	Negligible
Nearby residential receptors	Variety of close range views gained; the Proposed Development would add to the cumulative situation particularly when observed from the east	Permanent	High	High	Local	Major	Development of Policy Villages 5 to the southeast (Heyford Masterplan, parcel 16) would prevent views to the Proposed Development from former Airmen's Quarters	Neutral
Users of nearby PROW (between Upper Heyford and the B430)	Sequential and simultaneous views; the Policy Villages 5 sites exert more visual influence and the addition of the Proposed Development	Permanent	High	High	Local	Major	~	Major

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	would add to the overall magnitude of change							
Users (vehicles) of nearest roads (short sections of Camp Road and one particular location of Kirtlington Road)	Sequential views; the Policy Villages 5 sites exert more visual influence and the addition of the Proposed Development would add to the overall magnitude of change	Permanent	Medium	High	Local	Major	~	Major
Other visual receptors, including non- NCN road linking SUSTRANS routes and Rousham Park	Proposed Development seen against other cumulative sites or in isolation with little change to the overall composition of the view	Permanent	High to Medium	Negligible	Local	Minor to Negligible	~	Minor to Negligible
Viewpoint 1	Proposed Development seen in relation to cumulative sites	Permanent	Medium	No Change	Local	Negligible (no change)	Retained and proposed planting along boundaries and within site	Negligible (no change)

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Viewpoint 2	Proposed Development seen in relation to cumulative sites	Permanent	High	No Change	Local	Negligible (no change)	Retained and proposed planting along boundaries and within site	Negligible (no change)
Viewpoint 3	Proposed Development seen in relation to cumulative sites	Permanent	High	No Change	Local	Negligible (no change)	Retained and proposed planting along boundaries and within site	Negligible (no change)
Viewpoint 4	Proposed Development seen in relation to cumulative sites	Permanent	High	No Change	Local	Negligible (no change)	~	Negligible
Viewpoint 5	Proposed Development seen in relation to cumulative sites	Permanent	High	No Change	Local	Negligible (no change)	~	Negligible (no change)
Viewpoint 6	Proposed Development seen in relation to cumulative sites	Permanent	Medium	No Change	Local	Negligible (no change)	~	Negligible (no change)
Viewpoint 7	Proposed Development seen in relation to cumulative sites except for Heyford Masterplan, parcels 16, 18,	Permanent	High	Negligible to No Change	Local	Negligible to Negligible (No Change)	~	Negligible to Negligible (No Change)

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	32 (west) and 34 (west)							
	Potential to be seen in cumulation with Heyford Masterplan, parcels 16, 18, 32 (west) and 34 (west)	Permanent	High	Medium to Negligible	Local	Major to Negligible	Retained and proposed planting along boundaries and within site	Major reducing to Moderate at Year 15, and Negligible
Viewpoint 8	Proposed Development seen in relation to cumulative sites except parcels 10, 20, 21, 22 and 32 (west)	Permanent	High	No Change	Local	Negligible (no change)	~	Negligible (no change)
	Potential to be seen in cumulation with parcels 10, 20, 21, 22 and 32 (west) Permanent High (positive)	Local	Major Beneficial	Retained and proposed planting along boundaries and within site	Major Beneficial			
Viewpoint 9	Proposed Development seen in relation to cumulative sites	Permanent	High	No Change	Local	Negligible (no change)	~	Negligible (no change)
Viewpoint 10	Proposed Development seen in relation	Permanent	High	No Change	Local	Negligible (no change)	~	Negligible (no change)

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	to cumulative sites								
Viewpoint 11	Proposed Development seen in relation to all cumulative sites except parcel 10	Permanent	Medium	No Change	Local	Negligible (no change)	~	Negligible (no change)	
	Potential to be seen in cumulation with parcel 10	Permanent	Medium	Neutral	Local	Major Beneficial to Neutral)	Retained and proposed planting along boundaries and within site, and high quality built form	Major Beneficial to Neutral	
Viewpoint 12	Proposed Development seen in relation to all cumulative sites except Heyford Masterplan, parcels 16, 18, and 34 (west)	Permanent	High	No Change	Local	Negligible (no change)	~	Negligible (no change)	
	Would be seen in cumulation with Heyford Masterplan, parcels 16, 18, and 34 (west)	Permanent	High	Low	Local	Neutral	Retained and proposed planting along boundaries and within site and landscape buffer planting within Heyford	Neutral	

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							Masterplan, parcel 18 Sports Park	
Viewpoint 13	Proposed Development seen in relation to all cumulative sites	Permanent	High	No Change	Local	Neutral to Negligible (no change)	Development of Heyford Masterplan, parcel 16 would fully screen views from this location to the Application Site	Neutral to Negligible (no change)
Viewpoint 14	Proposed Development seen in relation to cumulative sites	Permanent	High	No Change	Local	Negligible (no change)	~	Negligible (no change)
Viewpoint 15	Proposed Development seen in relation to cumulative sites except Heyford Masterplan, parcels 16, 18, and 34 (west)	Permanent	High	No Change	Local	Negligible (no change)	~	Negligible (no change)
	Potential to be seen in cumulation with Heyford Masterplan, parcels 16, 18, and 34 (west)	Permanent	High	Moderate to No Change	Local	Major to Negligible (No Change)	Retained and proposed planting along boundaries and within site	Major reducing to Moderate at Year 15, and Negligible (No Change)