

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

Land at Wilsford Road, Ancaster

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influence®



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1 Introduction

Outline

- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been prepared by Influence Environmental Limited, a chartered Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning practice. It is prepared in support of a planning application for Outline Planning for a residential development of up to 96 No. dwellings with associated access.
- 1.2 Influence has been appointed by Nick Grace from Grace Machin Planning and Property on behalf of AFS Dean Ltd.
- 1.3 The LVA has been undertaken as a stand-alone report based upon the guidance contained within the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA)¹. It provides an appraisal of the proposed development within the identified application site and surrounding study area.

Project Description

- 1.4 This report has been prepared to assess the landscape and visual amenity of the site and resulting landscape and visual effects of the proposed development upon the receiving landscape and visual resource; considering both construction and operational phases of the proposals.
- 1.5 The proposed development consists of:
 - Up to 96 residential units including 1,2,3 & 4 bedrooms;
 - New access point off Wilsford Lane;
 - Substantial landscape buffer to the eastern boundary including a new footpath route; and
 - Substantial POS including a LEAP and LAP through the centre of the development;
- 1.6 The location of the proposed development is shown on figures INF_N0677(08)001 and a full description of the proposals and potential associated effects is provided in section 6 of this report.

¹ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013

2 Planning Context

Introduction

2.1 Aspects of planning guidance and policy, which are of particular relevance to the LVIA, are examined below. Relevant statutory, non-statutory and planning designations within the LVIA study area are shown on figure INF_N0677(08)002

International Legislation

- 2.2 The European Landscape Convention (ELC)², which was signed by the UK in February 2006 and became binding in 2007, is the first international convention to focus specifically on landscape issues and aims to protect, manage and plan landscapes in Europe.
- 2.3 The ELC highlights the importance of developing landscape policies dedicated to the protection, management and creation of landscapes, and establishing procedures for the general public and other stakeholders to participate in policy creation and implementation.
- 2.4 The ELC defines landscape as "an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and / or human factors"³.

National Legislation

2.5 This report takes into account the legislation and policy relevant to landscape and visual amenity, and the relevant ecology and cultural heritage including the following.

Hedgerow Regulations

- 2.6 The Hedgerow Regulations⁴ aim to protect 'important' hedgerows that are of significant archaeological, historic, wildlife or landscape value. Member States are encouraged to manage linear landscape features with a continuous structure or with biodiversity function⁵.
- 2.7 According to regulations, a hedgerow is important if it has existed for 30 years or more, is over 20m in length and it satisfies various wildlife, landscape or historical criteria specified in the regulations.

Public Rights of Way

- 2.8 Legislation with regard to Public Rights of Way (PRoW) is in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, Countryside Act 1968, Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Highways Act 1980, Rights of Way Act 1990 and Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW 2000).
- 2.9 PRoW are recorded on Definitive Maps by the County Council and are protected under the above legislation. Applications and consultation are required for any works that would affect

² Council of Europe, 2004

³ Council of Europe, 2004

⁴ The Environment Act 1995 (Part 5) Hedgerow Regulations 1997 (SI 1997 No, 1160)

⁵ ODPM Circular 06/2005

a PRoW, for example a temporary diversion during construction works, a permanent diversion as the result of a proposed development or any other changes to the routes.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.10 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁶ is a material consideration and provides guidance for regional and local planning. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which forms the basis of plan-making and decision-taking.
- 2.11 The NPPF sets out three objectives in order to achieve sustainable development economic, social and environmental. The environmental objective is relevant to this report. Particularly relevant is the requirement to *"contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment"*.
- 2.12 The NPPF provides guidance on how to deliver sustainable development. The planning principles of relevance to this LVIA are summarised as:
 - Section 12 Achieving well-designed places, which addresses the issue of good design for new developments. Developments should add to the overall quality of an area, should be visually attractive with regards to architecture, layout and landscaping, should be sympathetic to local character and establish or maintain a sense of place;
 - Section 15 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment, which states that the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside should be recognised. Valued landscapes such as National Parks and AONB should be conserved and enhanced, with the scale of development limited in these areas;
 - Section 16 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, requires that new development should make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness, taking into account the significance of associated heritage asset.

Local Planning Policy

- 2.13 The application site is located within the administrative jurisdiction of South Kesteven District Council.
- 2.14 The site has been allocated as LV-H1 along with LV-H2 which is to the south of Wilsford Lane. These two sites form the only allocations for Ancaster and allow for up to 131 dwellings (LV-H2: Wilsford Lane (SKLP211) Indicative Unit Numbers: 35)
- 2.15 The Development Principles for LV-H1 state that;
 - Landscape screening to southern edge will be required so as to reduce the impact on views into the site from the open countryside.
- 2.16 A brief summary of the key aspects of the local planning policies that are considered relevant to the landscape and visual assessment are presented below.

⁶ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019

South Kesteven District Local Plan 2011-2036

2.17 The plan as others is divided into different criteria of policies. The amin overarching Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy policies include SP4 with relevance to the landscape and visual resource.

SP4: Development on the Edge of Settlements

2.18 This policy sets out specific and essential criteria for proposals on the edge of settlements. Elevant criteria states that developments;

b) be well designed and appropriate in size/scale, layout and character to the setting and area;

d) states that developments 'do not extend obtrusively into the open countryside and be appropriate to the landscape, environment and heritage characteristics of the area

2.19 Policies which are specific to Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Built Environments include EN1 & EN3

EN1: Landscape Character

2.20 South Kesteven Landscape Character Areas form the basis of this policy, for Ancaster. Setting out that development must respond to the appropriate character of the natural, historic and cultural features of the landscape. This policy references the 'Points of Compass' appraisal for larger villages.

EN3: Green Infrastructure

- 2.21 Policy EN3 sets out the importance of multi functional green corridors wildlife, recreational and functional and that Development Proposals should ensure that existing and new green infrastructure is considered and integrated into scheme.
- 2.22 Proposal that cause harm to these networks will in the main not be permitted.

'Points of Compass' appraisal Ancaster

- 2.23 To inform the development of the Local Plan and the consideration of potential sites for allocation, SKDC appraised broad areas around the key settlement to gain an overview of the merits of promoting development at various broad areas.
- 2.24 The appraisal included an evaluation of Biodiversity, Historic Environment and Landscape Quality.
- 2.25 The Application site falls within Compass Segment Anc2.
- 2.26 In the site summary sheet, along with the recommendation to allocate in part, the following points are made;
 - The site is part within the Southern Lincolnshire Edge Character Area development could potentially have a negative impact although it may be possible to mitigate this through design at the planning application stage;
 - It is a flat site with limited views in and out;
- 2.27 It concluded that on balance the development of the site would not have a significant impact on the landscape and townscape of Ancaster.

Designations and Registered Sites

- 2.28 The application site is not located within any national or local nature, heritage or landscape designation.
- 2.29 Ancaster is an original Roman town are there is still a lot of evidence of this. The old Roman Marching Camp and Roman Settlements lie to the south and north west of the main town as it exists now.
- 2.30 Within the town itself are two Grade II* buildings Ancaster House and Ancaster Hall with Sudbrook Old Hall to the north (also Grade II*) At least twelve Grade II listings are located in the area (Ancaster and the village of Wilsford to the east of the site) and the two churches are Grade I.
- 2.31 To the west associated with the land around Willougby Moor is Moor Closes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). There are three further to the south town and an area of Open Access Land associated with the Ancaster Valley SSSI.
- 2.32 The area is well connected by a simple network of Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) primarily radiating from the settlements.

3 Methodology

Guidance

- 3.1 The format of this LVIA is based on the principles set out in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition⁷, the Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland⁸ and An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment⁹. A detailed methodology is provided in Appendix A.
- 3.2 Viewpoint photographs have been presented in accordance with the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals.

Study Area

- 3.3 A computer modelled Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) was initially run to establish the theoretical ('worst case scenario') visibility of the proposed development in the surrounding landscape and assist with the process of defining the LVIA study area. This theoretical visibility is based on topography alone and does not take account of intervening vegetation and built form.
- 3.4 Following the initial desktop study, a site visit was carried out and the actual visibility of the application site and the proposed development, where landscape and visual impacts could potentially occur, was found to be restricted by the surrounding landform combined with intervening vegetation and built form, however as shown by the representative viewpoints the nature of the undulating topography the visibility is fairly represented on the ZTV.
- 3.5 Due to the built form of Ancaster, views to the west are not as available as set out on the ZTV. Based on this information the study area of the LVIA has been defined as a maximum of 2.5 -3km from the application site.
- 3.6 Only landscape and visual receptors within the LVIA study area have been considered in the assessment, as there is no potential for any significant landscape and/or visual effects to be incurred beyond that area.

Consultation

3.7 No additional consultation has been carried out.

⁷ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013

⁸ Former Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002

⁹ Natural England, 2014

4 Landscape and Visual Appraisal

4.1 The landscape character within the LVIA study area is described and assessed below, and relevant information concerning landscape character is shown in figure INF_N0677(08)003 which illustrates the existing relevant landscape character areas and the key landscape features within the study area.

Landscape Character Assessment

National Landscape Character

4.2 The site is located within National Character Area 47 Southern Lincolnshire Edge. The key characteristics of the NCA relevant to this proposal are summarised below:

NCA 47 Southern Lincolnshire Edge

- 4.3 The NCA is not as large as some and there are some key features of note however the Local Landscape Character Assessment provides a good basis including a determination of sensitivity in relation to the landscape character surrounding the site. Points of note from the NCA are;
 - SEO 3 relates to planned developments and sets out that they should explore opportunities to incorporate tree planting into new developments, where appropriate; and
 - Ensuring that any new development incorporate accessible greenspace, offering residents opportunities for recreation and to benefit from contact with the natural environment.
 - There is an overriding direction to manage the natural characteristic of the landscape

Local Landscape Character

South Kesteven Landscape Assessment (SKLCA)

- 4.4 The sites lie on the eastern extent of the district boundary and the forms the northern and eastern limits of the SKLCA, however the overall character area extends beyond the boundary into North Kesteven. The Proposals fall within the **Southern LincoInshire Edge** LCA. The key characteristics are listed as;
 - Large scale open arable landscape;
 - Dominant western scarp slope known as the 'Cliff'
 - Large rectilinear fields with some fragmented hedgerows and shelterbelts
 - Sparse settlement pattern on top of the escarpment; and
 - Active and redundant airfields
- 4.5 Ancaster is one of the main settlements in the LCA located on the Roman road, Ermine Street. The overall landscape character is of a large scale, open, arable landscape. There are some areas of woodland and shelterbelts but predominantly it is open. Farmsteads are isolated. Overall, it is a remote and relatively simple agricultural landscape. Large rectilinear fields allow extensive views. There is a sparse settlement pattern.

- 4.6 In terms of built form, particularly residential, existing properties have allowed gardens on larger plots to mature to soften those boundaries between the villages and the surrounding arable land.
- 4.7 Landscape sensitivity to new employment and residential is likely to be medium to high based on the mainly remote and rural nature of the landscape although it is acknowledged that the landscape itself contains relatively few sensitive landscape features.
- 4.8 Management objectives which are relevant to this Proposal are;
 - Retain and enhance traditional field boundaries including hedgerows and limestone walls;
 - Protect and enhance shelterbelts and woodland; and
 - Use of limestone for new construction in the village or countryside.

Landscape Observations

- 4.9 The application site is located on the eastern extent of Ancaster, bound by existing residential developments to its western boundary. Hillside comprises of 1960's houses and a small number of bungalows to the northern boundary and Mercia Drive and Saxonway to the north are more modern developments, constructed circa 2005.
- 4.10 Ancaster is originally a Roman Town located on one of the most well know Roman roads in the country Ermine Street. The stone of the area has influenced the colour and style of buildings in the town. As with most towns the more modern interventions have been on the periphery however, they have been constructed in lighter colour stone to reflect the character of the towns heritage.
- 4.11 The town lies at the eastern end of a local valley at approximately 50m AOD, the surrounding land rising to 114m AOD to the north west and 123m AOD to the south west at the airfield on Barkston Heath.
- 4.12 To the west of the town is Willoughby Moor plantations, fishing lakes and camping located in this valley, connected to the town and then the surrounding area through a strong network of PRoWs. This is a more wooded area of the landscape and contributes to assimilating Ancaster into the valley, especially from views from the north east.
- 4.13 Quarrying is a feature of the landscape and the Castle Quarry o(r Goldholme Stone Quarry) on the A153 is a prominent feature in the landscape having almost doubled in size on this site since 2004.
- 4.14 The Site itself is a simple agricultural field bound on 3 sides by mature hedgerows. The hedgerow to the west is the most inconsistent with strong well maintained portions and intermittent gappy sections. The eastern most edges of the site are mature and dense wooded hedgerows and small corpses. There are no internal features and the hedgerow trees of note are limited. The topography of the site rises from approximately 45m AOD to 65m AOD in the east.
- 4.15 The landscape of the surrounding area is typical of the Southern Lincolnshire Edge LCA in terms of the large scale open arable landscape and the rectilinear field patterns with fragmented hedgerows and shelterbelts.

- 4.16 It is a simple landscape and although not distinctive is pleasant and there is a feeling of separation from the settlements especially when walking to footpaths to the north east.
- 4.17 It is considered that the application site has a medium sensitivity to residential development as proposed due to its enclosed boundaries, the lack of internal features and its proximity to the settlement. The topography of the site increases its sensitivity as it forms the higher ground circulating the southern aspect of the site and forms a gateway from the east.

Visual Sensitivities

- 4.18 The visibility of the proposed development has been established by combining desktop study, ZTV analysis and information attained by the assessor during field assessment. To aid the visual assessment an analysis of topography has also been undertaken.
- 4.19 Figure INF_N0677(08)001 shows the location of viewpoints selected as representative of the key sensitive receptors of the proposed development. The figure also records the actual visibility of the application site as experienced during the site visit.

Viewpoints

- 4.20 The ZTV analysis and subsequent site visits identified several areas within the LVIA study area which would have visibility of the proposed development.
- 4.21 A series of viewpoints, representing different types of views and groups of receptors within both the immediate area and wider surroundings, have been identified to consider the visual impact of the proposed development. Some views have been included in order to demonstrate that views are not available from a particular location or to a particular receptor.
- 4.22 The key sensitive receptors identified for this LVA include:
 - Residents of Mercia Drive, Hillside and Saxon Way
 - Users of the Public Rights of Way to the north of the town;
 - Walkers and drivers on Wilsford Lane; and
 - Users of the PRoWs to the south of the settlement

Visual Receptors

Residents

- 4.23 The key receptors in this group include those residents of Hillside, Mercia Drive and Saxonway located in the developments to the west of the Application Site. Viewpoint 3 represents the views from Hillside looking east over the bungalows which bound part of the site and Viewpoint 8 looks north from where the PRoW crosses Mercia Drive, up Saxonway to the site boundary. Viewpoint 7 is recorded along the PRoW parallel with Hillside but is also representative of the wider residents
- 4.24 For those limited residents whose properties are on the western site boundary they currently experience an open agricultural field which will permanently change to built form and therefore will experience a high degree of change. Those residents who are located back from the edge of the boundary but are in close proximity or whose main views face east will

experience a limited change in their view and overall. Currently they experience open skylines and mixed roofscapes which will remain, but the quantum of built form will be increased when looking east. For those residents within the developments, facing north, south, or west the intensity of development in their surrounds will increase but overall, the change in the experience and their direct views will be minimal.

Users of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) to the north

- 4.25 Viewpoints have been selected and recorded which represent the users of the PRoWs in the local landscape. Both the ZTV and the field survey determined that views are available from the north east south of Church Lane and along Pottergate Road to the north. These views are represented by Viewpoint 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14.
- 4.26 Generally, the views from the northwest, are across middle ground arable fields, the town nestling in the valley before the land rises to the south beyond the town. The views from Pottergate Road (10 and 11) are focused along the farm track and then the single-track road as it heads south towards the town. Views towards the higher ground to the south are of a rolling arable landscape, the field boundaries are well defined, and the mid ground is well vegetated.
- 4.27 The open field which forms the southern part of the wider allocation is visible, but vegetation restricts direct views to LV-H1. From Fir Tree Lane there are uninterrupted open views across agricultural fields with no intervening tree planting and both allocation sites are clear on the southern slopes. (VP 14)
- 4.28 The quarry is a distracting element on the horizon and the chicken sheds are noticeable to the north. The built edge of Ancaster is clearly linearly defined, a hard edge in places and conversely very well vegetated in others. Currently it forms a distinct break in the character between settlement and countryside.
- 4.29 Clearly the Proposals will introduce a new element in the view but not a new typology. The view is one of the towns in its rural setting and this will not be changed. The change arises from built form pushing south up onto the higher land beyond the existing settlement edge. The Proposals will ultimately be read in conjunction with the development coming forward on the allocation, south of Wilsford Lane as a combined new residential edge to Ancaster. The strong vegetation on Wilsford Lane helps to form strong vegetative breaks running east-west.
- 4.30 Views from the higher ground to the northwest, represented by Views 12 & 13, contain similar elements just set in a wider view. The users of these PRoWs are experiencing a panoramic view across the landscape surrounding Ancaster. The town is nestled in the lower ground within mature vegetation, the church standing as a representative marker. The woodland copses, hedgerow trees and well-maintained hedgerows radiating from the town, in combination with the gently undulating topography result in a balanced view. The allocation site is not immediately discernible, and development will not compromise the experience of the view. When studied new development will appear to elongate the current town form up the slope but not to the detriment of the overall legibility of the key components of the view.

Users of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) to the south

4.31 Views are significantly more limited from the south. Viewpoint 04 represents the closest location where the opportunity for a view may arise. The routes around Slate House Farm and along the Ancaster Valley were visited but topography and vegetation hindered any views. From VP04 the users of the PRoW experience pleasant views of the approach to the town through a typical rural landscape, with similar components to those from the north. The viewer is on slightly higher ground with the site only about 10m lower. The dense planting round the junction of the A153 and Wilsford Lane in combination with the strong vegetated edge to Wilsford Lane restrict views of the site. Once the development commences and prior to it maturing there will be glimpsed views available above the boundary vegetation. However, the open field captured in the mid ground is the LV-H2 allocation site and once this is developed it will obscure all views of the site.

Road Users

- 4.32 Wilsford Lane forms the southern boundary to the site (VPO1) and is the main access to the town from the east, off the A153 which connects on to Sleaford (VP O2). Representative views show that views are limited from the junction, through gaps in the hedge but the main views will be once along the lane itself. Both sides of the lane are well vegetated, and views are mainly focussed along the road. The northern side along the Site boundary is more 'gappy' and Viewpoint 05 is available through a large gap where the access will be formed.
- 4.33 The view along the road will largely remain intact once the development has been completed. The access point will be formalised and appear more structured and units will be visible through the hedge. The Proposals show a strategy for limited units along the front, gable end to the road and new tree planting within the site which will limit the potential impact. Importantly most of the existing trees (other than 2 'C' Category trees near the entrance) will be retained and the buffer to the road enhanced.
- 4.34 At the entrance there will be a clear change in the view and at this point the Proposals in their entirety will be experienced. The users of the footpath and the road will experience built form in the place of green field.

Layout Plan and Landscape Strategy

- 4.36 The development would be comprised of the following elements:
 - Up to 96 residential units comprising a mix of 1,2,3 & 4 bedroom properties;
 - Gateway' focal units are located at the entrance to the site to form a robust gateway;
 - A lower density layout is set out along Wilsford Lane with gable ends and units set back from Wilsford Lane edge behind the existing and improved vegetated site boundary;
 - Retention of all except 2 C Category Sycamore trees along the frontage. These are in order to form the access point on to Wilsford Lane;
 - Provision of a substantial landscape buffer at a minimum width of 10m wide, to the south eastern edge of the site which incorporates a footpath, areas of accessible Public Open Space (POS) and is enhanced and improved with significant areas of new planting;
 - An additional footpath connection is provided into the south eastern corner of the site to facilitate better connectivity with surrounding public routes;
 - Retention of the mature hedgerow boundary and trees along Wilsford Lane, enhanced with additional planting;
 - Large area of Public Open Space running linearly through the centre of the development, providing a swathe of green to break up the development and including Local Equipped area of Play and Local Area of Play for variety of age groups;

5 Summary and Conclusions

- 5.1 The Proposals as presented on Artech drawing 1520D/002 is for up to 96 dwellings on land allocated for residential development on Wilsford Lane, Ancaster.
- 5.2 Sensitive receptors are identified, and representative views recorded from appropriate locations. These are primarily,
 - Residents of Mercia Drive, Hillside and Saxon Way
 - Users of the Public Rights of Way to the north of the town;
 - Walkers and drivers on Wilsford Lane; and
 - Users of the PRoWs to the south of the settlement
- 5.3 With reference to the methodology attached to this statement, the Application Site and the adjacent landscape are considered to have a medium sensitivity to the Proposals. The most sensitive elements of the landscape are the rising topography and the edge of settlement location. However the existing enclosure from the retained vegetation and the strong, substantial buffers being proposed through the scheme will help to mitigate the impact. The layout of the scheme is designed to respond to the topography and makes allowances for a large swathe of POS through the development which breaks up the mass of the built form.
- 5.4 Although development has not been submitted for planning on the adjacent parcel, it can be assumed that ultimately development will come forward as part of a cohesive allocation for development on this edge of Ancaster. No parcels have been allocated in any other locations in Ancaster.
- 5.5 The most sensitive of the visual receptors identified are residents and users of the PRoWs locally. Opportunities for clear views of the Site are limited to the public highway path adjacent to the site and the users of PRoWs in the wider landscape to the north of Ancaster. Glimpsed views can be achieved from the PRoW running east of the site over and through the adjacent residential development.
- 5.6 The majority of residents will not experience a large change in their view. Those limited residents located along the western boundary of the site will experience a permanent and high degree of change as a result of the Proposals s will the users of Wilsford Lane. However due to internal landscaping, the enhanced roadside buffers and the placement of the buildings the Proposals have sought to mitigate the most adverse impacts where possible.
- 5.7 In wider views, particularly from the PRoWs, the Site is understood within the context of settlement edge of Ancaster. The new development proposals will appear to elongate the current town form up the slope but not to the detriment of the overall legibility of the key components of the view.

6 References

Communities and Local Government, 2012, National Planning Policy Framework

Council of Europe, 2004, European Landscape Convention

Former Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002, Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland

Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management, 2013, Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition

Landscape Institute, 2011, Advice Note 01/11 Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual assessment

Natural England, 2014, An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment

Parliament of the United Kingdom, 1995, Environment Act (Part 5) Hedgerow Regulations 1997 (SI 1997 No, 1160)

Appendices

Appendix A – LVIA Methodology

A Methodology

Introduction

1.1 This Methodology is overarching guidance and encompasses all the criteria required to assess a scheme robustly through the landscape and visual process. Unless stated it supports and is referenced as part of Landscape Statements (LVS), Landscape and Visual Appraisals (LVA) and Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIA) however the individual reports may depart or adapt these guidelines but will make reference and explanation through the detailed reports.

Guidance

- 1.2 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and supporting studies and surveys were conducted in accordance with the principles set out by Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland ¹and Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition².
- 1.3 Other guidance with regard to developments in the landscape that has informed the LVIA include Hedgerow Regulations³ and Lighting in the Countryside: Towards Good Practice⁴.

Viewpoint photographs have been presented in accordance with the Landscape Institute's Advice Note 01/11 Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual impact assessment.

It is acknowledged that this advice note has been updated and are now referred to as Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals. The baseline work for this work was carried out prior to this amended document and it is considered that the presentation of the views is acceptable and appropriate for this assessment.

Scope of the Landscape and Visual Assessment

- 1.4 The LVIA considers the predicted effects of development on landscape resources (both features and character) and on people's visual amenity.
- 1.5 Landscape and visual assessments are two separate but interlinked processes that are undertaken in parallel. The assessments are informed by a combination of desk and site based appraisal techniques and professional judgements.

¹ Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002

² Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management 3rd Edition, 2013

³ UK Parliament, 1997

⁴ Department for Communities and Local Government, 1997

- 1.6 The landscape assessment considers the effects of the proposed development on the physical landscape, which may give rise to changes in its character, and how this is experienced; separately considering the effects of development on:
 - Landscape character areas (area with recognisable, consistent pattern of landscape elements identified at different scales by Natural England, county and local councils);
 - Designated landscape resources (areas of landscape designated and protected under national and local policy);
- 1.7 The visual assessment considers the potential changes that would occur to available views in a landscape as a result of the development proposals, the resultant effect on visual amenity and people's responses to the changes.
- 1.8 The LVIA comprises, firstly the identification, understanding and description of the existing landscape and visual baseline conditions (landscape receptors and groups of views likely to be impacted by the proposed development within a defined study area) and secondly the identification and description of the impacts arising from the development on the landscape and the visual receptors.
- 1.9 The assessment examines both construction phase impacts and impacts on completion of the proposed scheme, to include assessing the impacts on Day 1 of completion and 15 years into operation. The impacts are assessed based on professional judgements and an understanding of the construction phases and phasing of completion, which are summarised in the LVIA and include any proposed landscape and visual mitigation works.

Stages in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

- 1.10 The LVIA process comprises the following stages:
 - Baseline assessment: record and analyse the existing nature and value of the landscape character and features, and visual amenity of the study area through desk and field-based appraisal;
 - Description of the nature, forms and features of the proposed development including and constraints and opportunities;
 - Assessment of sensitivity of the existing landscape and identified visual receptors to change and assessment;
 - Identification of potential landscape and visual impacts due to the proposed development;
 - Identification of proposed mitigation measures appropriate to the development and its landscape context;
 - Assessment of the magnitude of effect upon the identified receptors, likely to result from implementation of the proposed development;
 - Assessment of the significance of the residual effects on landscape and visual resource, taking into account appropriate mitigation.
- 1.11 The assessment process is iterative; the analysis of the baseline conditions and evaluation of the potential effects resulting from a development informs the evolution of the proposed development. It is, therefore, important to take into consideration the mitigation that is inherent or proposed as part of the development in order to assess the residual effects and their significance.

1.12 The assessment process is recorded in two principal stages: a baseline study of the existing landscape and surrounding visual receptor groups, followed by the impact assessment.

Study Area

- 1.13 Published guidance provides recommendations on the extent of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) that should be produced in order to assess the area that would potentially experience significant visual effects.
- 1.14 The purpose of the LVIA is to identify significant landscape and visual effects. It is, therefore, reasonable to limit the study area in various respects in order to meet the requirements of the specific project in its landscape context and to reflect the likelihood of significant effects arising over very long distances. It is also important that the more significant effects occurring over shorter distances are given appropriate emphasis. The report has adopted the following approach:

Computer Based Visibility Analysis – Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

- 1.15 In order to identify landscape resources and visual receptors within the landscape surrounding the application site that may be affected by a development, a ZTV plan is produced to illustrate the worst-case extent of the potential visibility of the proposed development. The ZTV identifies the maximum area over which it is theoretically possible to see some part of the proposed development but does not take account of screening that may result from vegetation, localised variations in topography and built form. The ZTV is created using a terrain model, which is based on ordnance Survey (OS) data at 1:25000 scale with contours at 5m intervals.
- 1.16 It should be noted that ZTVs are used as a working tool to inform the assessment and do not convey the nature or magnitude of visual effects. The actual visual effects of the proposed development are assessed through a more detailed analysis of specific viewpoints and based on field survey observations. In combination with a site visit, this information enables the identification of a provisional list of representative viewpoints and allows the determining authority and consultees to judge how representative these are and whether they include particularly sensitive receptors and vantage points.
- 1.17 A bare ground ZTV has been prepared around the proposed development site, for a maximum building height of 9m, to take account of the worst-case scenario based on proposed building heights. This comprehensive ZTV has been examined in order to identify particularly sensitive locations that would potentially experience significant visual effects e.g. particularly important visitor destinations, or those in protected landscapes (if appropriate) or promoted viewpoints and national trails.
- 1.18 An appropriate study area has been selected for the assessment as it is considered to represent the most concentrated and significant potential impacts. This is based on professional experience of residential and mixed-use development assessment, that visibility over greater distance does not have as much potential to result in significant changes to landscape and visual receptors in the landscape context.

1.19 The LVIA focusses on potentially significant landscape and visual effects likely to occur within the localised study area.

Landscape Assessment

- 1.20 The former Countryside Agency Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland⁵ makes a distinction between the characterisation process and the judgementmaking process. The baseline section of the LVIA, therefore, deals predominantly with the characterisation process, in which the attributes of the landscape are described.
- 1.21 In order to be effective, this LVIA needs to consider the landscape resource within the study area at an appropriate level of detail. Initially, a desktop study is undertaken in order to identify any existing landscape character assessments that describe landscape designations and character areas within the LVIA study area. Following this desk-based analysis, site visits are carried out to verify the existing landscape characterisation and identify and assess the physical components and structure of the landscape within the application site and its surroundings.
- 1.22 The baseline divides the application site and surroundings into a series of landscape character areas, which are then brought forward for the assessment if the potential for impact on the landscape resource is identified.
- 1.23 In addition to landscape character, the proposed development's effect on landscape elements and features is also considered. The relevant groups of landscape elements and features include:
 - Landform;
 - Land cover and vegetation (trees, hedgerows, grassland etc.);
 - Land use (including Public Open Space);
 - Watercourses;
 - Accessibility (public footpaths/cycleways).

Landscape Sensitivity

- 1.24 Landscape is a combination of both cultural and physical components that give rise to patterns that are distinctive to particular localities and help to define a 'sense of place'. Landscape character is defined by the interaction of influences and components such as landform, hydrology, vegetation, landcover, land use pattern and cultural features and associations, and their relationship with the surroundings.
- 1.25 Although landscape has some intrinsic sensitivity, different landscape receptors have different elements and features that can accommodate a variety of development types. To reliably inform detailed assessment of impacts, landscape sensitivity needs to be determined with reference to the changes arising from a specific type of development. Therefore, landscape sensitivity is assessed combining judgments on the value attached to a landscape and the susceptibility to the type of change or development proposed.

⁵ Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002

- 1.26 Landscape value is the relative value attached to a potentially affected landscape. Landscape value is relative in relation to the different stakeholders and different parts of society that use or experience a landscape. Factors that have been considered in making judgments on landscape value include designations (both national and local), local planning documents, status of features (eg TPOs or Conservation Areas) and local community and interests (for example local green spaces, village greens or allotments). Landscape value will vary in response to the specific landscape that is being considered.
- 1.27 The value is assessed as high, medium or low and the assessment is made based on the following factors:
 - The quality placed on the landscape, including the scenic quality;
 - The presence of rare elements or features, or rare landscape character types;
 - Whether the landscape contains a particular character and/or features or elements considered to be particularly important examples;
 - The presence of nature, historical or cultural features of interest;
 - Evidence that the landscape is important for recreational users;
 - Perceptual aspects, such as tranquillity or wildness;
 - Associations of the landscape with particular people in history (such as artists or writers), or historical events, that contribute to the perception of natural beauty.
- 1.28 The second component of landscape sensitivity relates to susceptibility. Landscape susceptibility to change is the ability to accommodate change without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation. In this context, the term landscape receptors can be expanded to cover overall character areas, condition or a particular landscape character type or an individual landscape element or feature. Landscape susceptibility will vary in response to the specific landscape that is being considered and to the nature of the type of change that may occur.
- 1.29 To assess landscape susceptibility it is important to appreciate the key characteristics and attributes of the landscape of the application site and surrounding study area, in order to understand local landscape variations and if the landscape of the application site fits with the description of the LCT/LCA that it is within.
- 1.30 The characteristics of the landscape that should be considered with regard to their susceptibility to change include a variety of attributes, such as scale and enclosure, landform, nature of land use, nature of existing elements or nature of existing features. Landscape susceptibility is described on the verbal scale as high, medium or low.
- 1.31 Sensitivity is a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgments of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor. Receptors can include specific elements of features or may be judged at a wider scale and include landscape character parcels, types or areas.
- 1.32 The consideration of value of the landscape receptor combined with susceptibility to the type of change arising from the proposal, allows for assessment of sensitivity of the landscape receptor. The sensitivity of landscape receptors is categorised as high, medium or low; the criteria for each category is outlined in Table A-1.

Receptor Sensitivity	Typical Criteria
High	A landscape of particularly distinctive character and high or exceptional scenic quality. Strong representation of the typical landscape character type.
	Intact landscape with excellent condition of elements and features. Presence of rare features in the landscape.
	May be nationally and/or regionally designated landscape for its scenic quality and character, such as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or National Park.
	High recreational value with strong cultural and historical associations.
	High susceptibility to changes arising from the proposal.
Medium	A landscape of moderately distinctive character and scenic quality. Typical landscape character type is apparent.
	Relatively intact landscape with occasional features of interest. May be locally designated for its quality and character.
	Receptor of higher value but lower susceptibility to the type of change or development, or vice versa.
Low	A landscape of little distinctive character or scenic quality or is damaged, neglected or poor character and lacking scenic quality.
	Landscape has become eroded with no more than occasional elements and features of interest. Not subject to any form of landscape designation.
	Receptor of low value and low susceptibility to the type of change arising from the proposal.

Table A-1 Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

Magnitude of Landscape Effect

- 1.33 Once the sensitivity of the landscape receptors has been determined, the effect that the proposed development would have on the landscape resource can be assessed.
- 1.34 The magnitude of effect from the proposed development on landscape character, designations or features is appraised, taking into account each phase (construction and completion) of the proposed development and any inherent / proposed mitigation. The assessment of the magnitude of effect takes into account the following factors:
 - The distance of the landscape receptor from the proposed development;
 - The degree to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are altered either by removal of existing components of the landscape or by addition of new ones, for example removal of hedges may change the small-scale, intimate landscape into a largescale, open one, of the introduction of new buildings or tall structures may alter open skylines;

- The extent of existing landscape elements that would be lost, the proportion of the total extent that this represents and the contribution of that element to the character of the landscape;
- The scale of the overall predicted change to character;
- The timescale or phasing of the construction stages;
- Whether the landscape change would be reversible or not.
- 1.35 The magnitude of effect is categorised as high, medium, low or negligible. This is a professional judgement based on the criteria for each magnitude as outlined in Table A-2 below. Different combinations of the below variables can apply in reaching an overall judgement on magnitude.

Magnitude of Effect	Typical Factors
High	The proposed development would cause a large, irreversible change to the existing landscape for a long period of time or permanently.
	Impact upon landscape features of international and national importance or on fundamental landscape elements such that this would change the key characteristics of that landscape.
	Long-term or permanent change to the existing landscape conditions.
Medium	The proposed development would cause a noticeable change to the existing landscape; however, few elements and features that contribute to the overall character would be affected.
	Medium or short-term change to landscape conditions.
	Moderate alteration to the individual components of the landscape, leading to small change in aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape.
Low	The proposed development would cause a small impact / change and would affect relatively few receptors.
	Temporary or reversible change in landscape conditions.
	The key characteristics of the landscape contributing to its character would not be significantly affected.
Negligible	The proposed development is appropriate in its context or barely perceptible. It may be difficult to differentiate from its surroundings and has very little or no impact on receptors compared to the baseline situation.
	No key characteristics of the landscape, contributing to its character would be affected.

Table A-2 Magnitude of Landscape Effects

Visual Assessment

1.36 Following desk studies and site visits a range of visual receptors (people) that have a potential to be affected by the proposed development are identified. They would include local

residents, users of footpaths and other routes, road users, users of recreational facilities, visitors to popular tourist attractions and noted viewpoints, or people at their place of work.

- 1.37 Potential viewpoints and areas for investigation are then identified following an initial study of Ordnance Survey (OS) maps, analysis of Zone of Theoretical Visibility and, most importantly, site visits; based on the following criteria:
 - Distance from the application site to the receptor;
 - The proportion of the application site / proposed development visible, as well as the absolute visibility of the proposed development;
 - The height of the proposed development relative to the receptor with reference also to the scale of other features in the view;
 - The number and character of elements that would be lost from or added to the view;
 - High concentrations of viewers, such as settlements, local recreational facilities, public footpaths and attractions etc;
 - Views illustrating the visual character of the surrounding area; and
 - Areas identified as having a high potential for visual impact.
- 1.38 A site visit was carried out to assess both general landscape character and views experienced by different types of visual receptors during the day.
- 1.39 Following desktop research to understand the surrounding potentially sensitive receptors, a selection of viewpoints was made to represent key relevant visual receptor types likely to be affected by the proposed development, such as residents of nearby properties, users of Public Rights of Way (PRoW), pedestrians, cyclists or road users; to enable the assessment of the proposed change in views and the significance of effect on these receptors.
- 1.40 Photographs illustrating views from this series of representative viewpoints were taken either using a Canon EOS 500D Digital SLR with lens set to a 35mm focal length to provide the closest possible approximation of a 50mm lens focal length ('true eye' vision) on a traditional 35mm film SLR camera, or a fixed 50mm FL Lens. The photographs have been reproduced in a series of viewpoint sheets with annotation and details of the image recorded. Where contextual views consist of more than one frame, the relevant frames are merged together using Photoshop Creative Cloud (CC) software. This is consistent with Visualisation Type 1: annotated viewpoint photographs and Visualisation type 3: Photomontage / Photowire.

Visual Receptors

- 1.41 Visual receptors are groups of people, which include the public or community at large, residents, visitors and other groups of viewers. Study of OS data, production of a ZTV and consultation with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) assist with identifying viewpoints for assessment that best represent the visual receptors likely to be affected by the proposed development.
- 1.42 Representative viewpoints are validated through site visits; resulting in the repositioning or exclusion of some of the preliminary viewpoints, due to lack of visibility towards the site.

Visual Sensitivity

- 1.43 Sensitivity of visual receptors, whose groups are represented by a selection of viewpoints, depends on their susceptibility to change in views and the value attached to the views that they experience.
- 1.44 The susceptibility of different visual receptors to changes in views and visual amenity is judged, based on:
 - The occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations; and
 - The extent to which their attention or interest may, therefore, be focussed on the views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations.
- 1.45 Judgements about the value of views take account of:
 - Recognition of the value attached to particular views, for example in relation to heritage / cultural assets, or through planning designations;
 - Indicators of the value attached to views by visitors, for example through appearances in guidebooks or on tourist maps, provision of facilities for their enjoyment and references to them in literature and art (Landscape Institute and Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013).
- 1.46 The sensitivity of the visual receptors is categorised as **high**, **medium** or **low**, as defined in Table A-3 below.

Receptor Sensitivity	Typical Criteria
High	 People with a particular interest in their surroundings or with prolonged viewing opportunities, examples include: Users of promoted viewpoints (often with interpretation boards); Users of tourist and visitor destinations including recreational or heritage sites (such as ornamental parks and open spaces); Visitors to recreational hilltops and peaks; Residential locations and occupiers of residential properties; People using important recreational routes, such as National Trails / long distance promoted routes, National Cycle Routes; Users of paths and Public Rights of Way (PRoVV) in nationally or locally designated landscapes.
Medium	 People with a general interest in their surroundings or with some viewing opportunities, examples include: Users of public open spaces and outdoor recreational spaces; Users of other public routes and PRoW; Visitors to local viewpoints and resting places.
Low	 People with a more limited or passing interest in their surroundings, examples include: Users of more transitory routes such as other public routes; Users of the local road network and major highways; People at their place of work; Users of indoor or sporting recreational facilities.

Table A-3 Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

Magnitude of Visual Effect

- 1.47 For each of the identified groups of receptors, the potential magnitude of visual effect (in comparison to the existing 'baseline' situation) was assessed, taking into account each phase of the proposed development and any inherent / proposed mitigation. The magnitude of visual effect takes into consideration the following factors:
 - The scale of change to the view with respect to loss or addition of features within the view and changes in its composition, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development;
 - The degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics;
 - The nature of the view of the proposed development, considering the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views would be full, partial or glimpsed;
 - The degree of visual intrusion or obstruction that would occur from the proposed development;
 - The angle of the view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;
 - The duration and reversibility of the assessed effect.
- 1.48 The magnitude of effect is categorised as **high**, **medium**, **low** or **negligible**. As with landscape, different combinations of the variables in the below table may apply.

Magnitude of Effect	Typical Factors				
High	Severe change to views;				
	Removal of valuable landscape features / elements that highly contribute to the overall quality and nature of the view;				
	Total change to the visual character of the surrounding landscape;				
	Large number of viewers affected over a prolonged period of time;				
	Development is highly prominent in the view.				
Medium	Moderate alteration to views;				
	Development affects few visual features / elements on or adjacent to the application site.				
	Reversible effect, affecting only a part of the wider view.				
	Development 'stands out' in the view.				
Low	The proposed development would cause a small impact / change and would affect relatively few receptors.				
	Change to views on transitory routes such as infrequently used paths and roads.				

Table A-4 Magnitude of Visual Effects

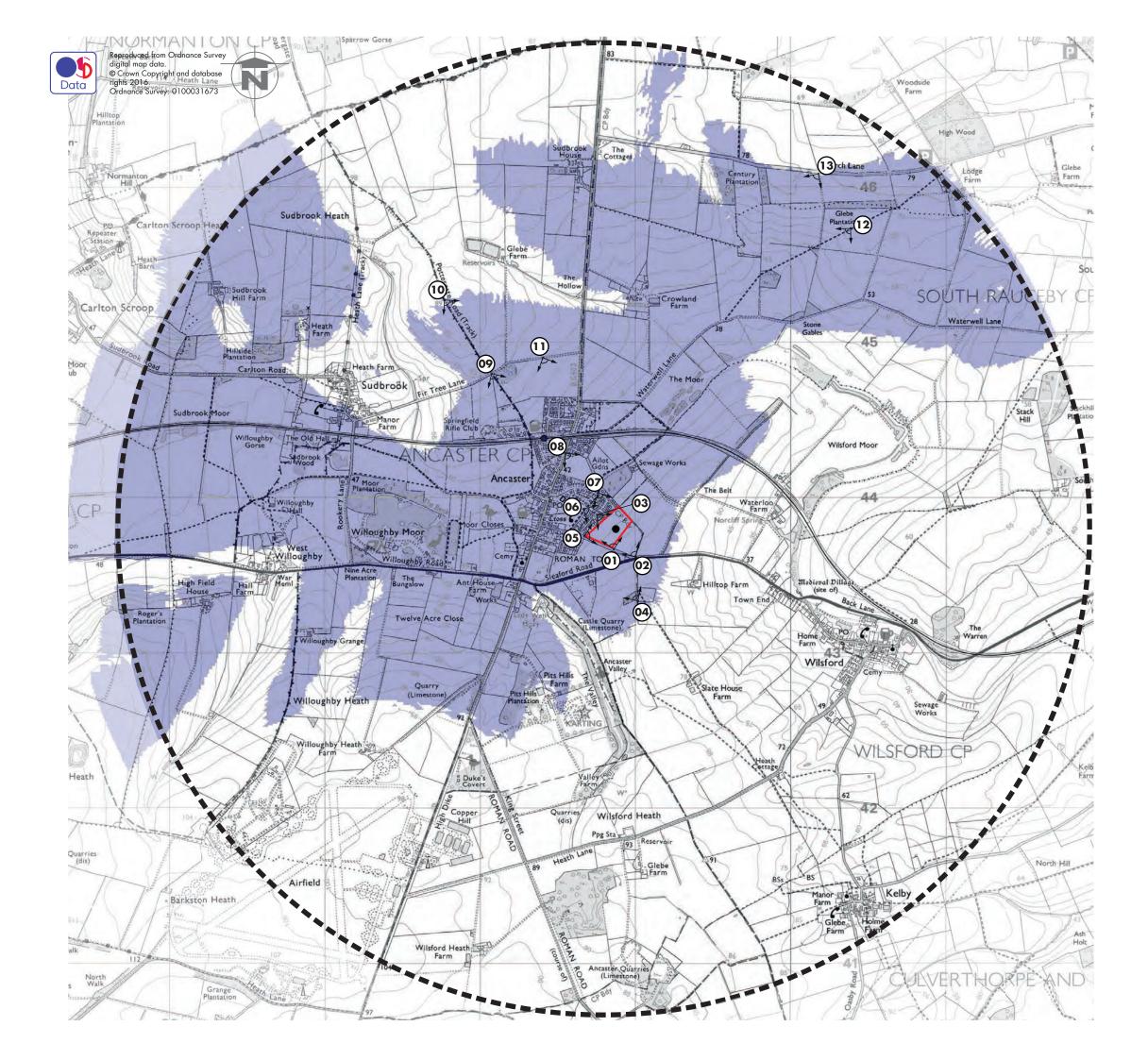
Magnitude of Effect	Typical Factors
	Small change to more complex views for a small number of viewers with no particular focus on the proposed development.
Negligible	The proposed development is appropriate in its context or barely perceptible. It may be difficult to differentiate from its surroundings and has very little or no impact on receptors compared to the baseline situation. It would have no or minimal effect on visual features / elements on or adjacent to the Application Site.

Nature of Effects

- 1.49 The LVIA considers whether the landscape and visual changes that would arise as a result of the proposed development would be beneficial or adverse. An adverse effect is one that introduces a new, discordant or intrusive element to the landscape or a view. A beneficial effect would be from an overall improvement to the landscape or a view, through the removal of existing discordant features and / or introduction of features of similar scale to those in the surrounding landscape or view that would contribute to its overall character.
- 1.50 With regard to the duration of landscape and visual effects, short to medium term effects are normally considered to be temporary and associated with the construction of the proposed development, and long-term effects are normally associated with a fully completed and operational scheme. Permanent effects are those which result in an irreversible change to the baseline conditions or will last for the foreseeable future.
- 1.51 The duration of landscape and visual effects is typically categorised as follows:
 - Long-term 15 years and beyond;
 - Medium-term 5 to 15 years;
 - Short-term 0 to 5 years.
- 1.52 Landscape and visual effects can be direct (effects that are caused by activities which are an integral part of the scheme) or indirect (effects that are due to activities that are not part of the scheme, eg regeneration benefits attributable to the scheme).

Figures

INF_N0677(08)001	Zone of Theoretical Visibility and Viewpoint Locations
INF_N0677(08)002	Landscape Designations and Features
INF_N0677(08)003	Landscape Character
INF_N0677(080004-010	Representative Viewpoints



Legend

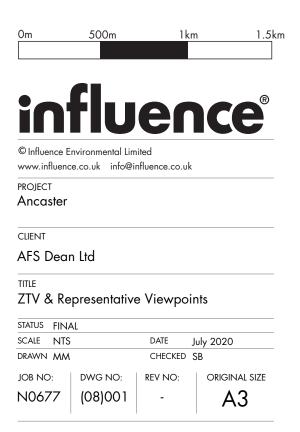


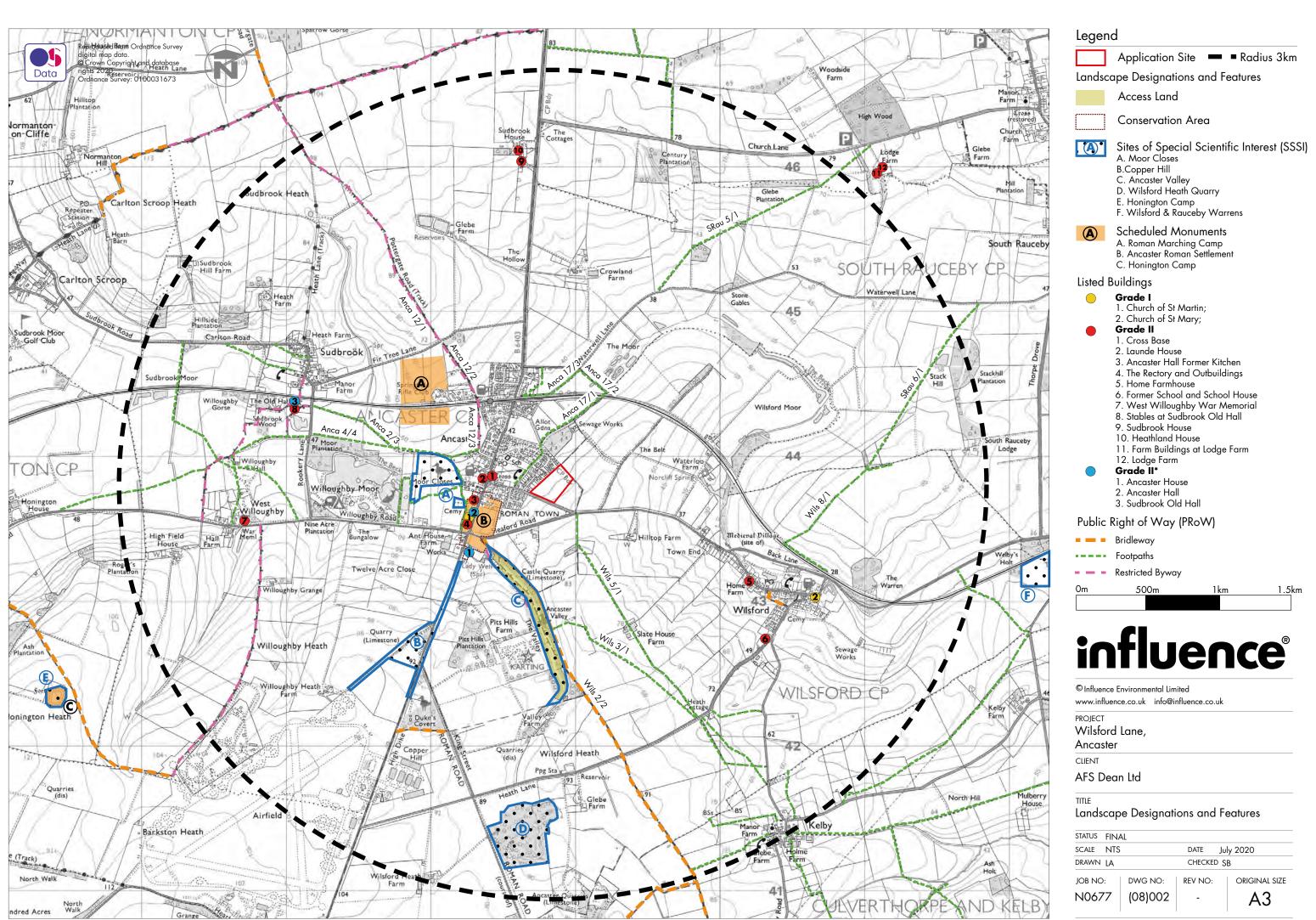
Zone of Theoretical Visibilty (ZTV)

Viewpoint

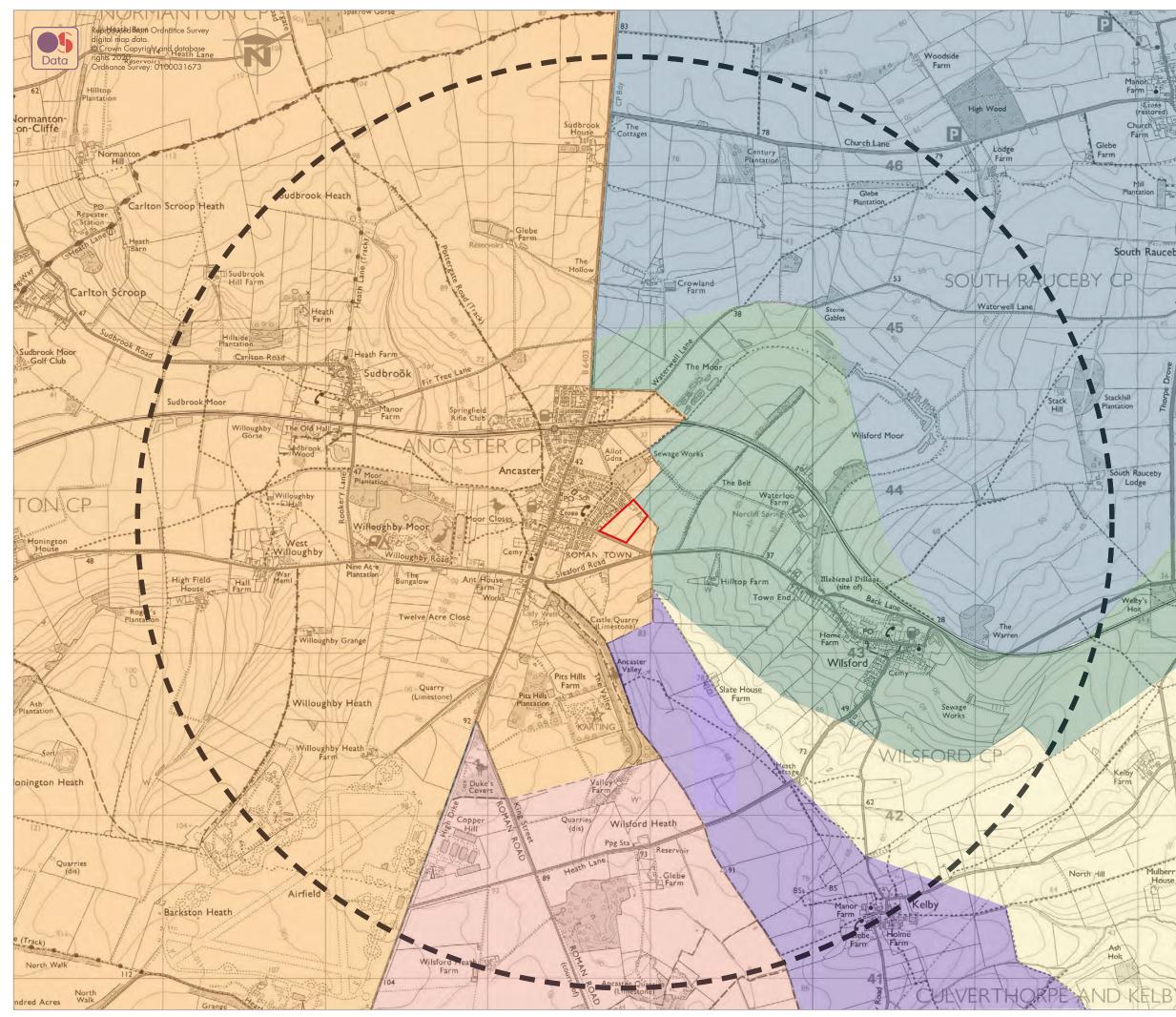
The ZTV illustrates the potential visibility of the proposed development based on topographical (bare earth) data only. Therefore, it does not take into account objects that may occur in the landscape, such as woodland or buildings, which may affect lines of sight.

The ZTV has been run to a height of 9m, taking in to account the height of the proposed buildings.





STATUS FIN	AL		
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Legend



Application Site

Radius 3km

Landscape Character

National Character Area (NCA)

Entire map encompased by NCA 47: Southern Lincolnshire

Local Landscape Character

The application site sits within the South Kesteven District and is closely bordered to the east by North Kesteven District, each district is broken down in to landscape character areas/types of which the following are of relevance to the application site:

South Kesteven District is split into 7 landscape character areas, the application site sits within the following: (South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment January 2007)

Southern Lincolnshire Edge Character Area

North Kesteven District is split into 13 landscape character sub - areas of which the following are of relevance to the application site: (North Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment September 2007)

- Slea Valley Wilsford Heath Upland Plateau Fringe
 - Rauceby Hills

Central Clays and Gravels





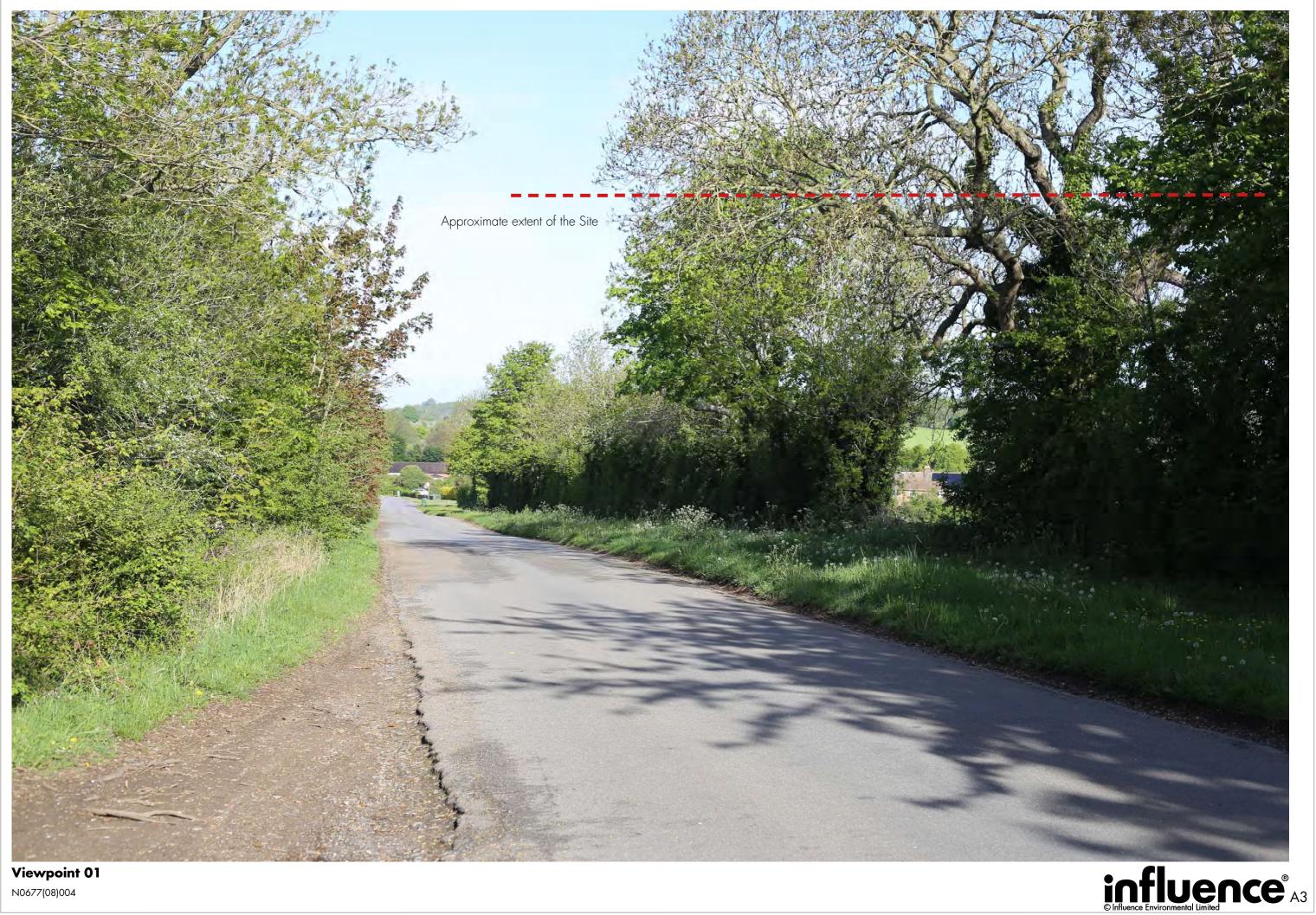
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PROJECT Wilsford Lane, Ancaster CLIENT

AFS Dean

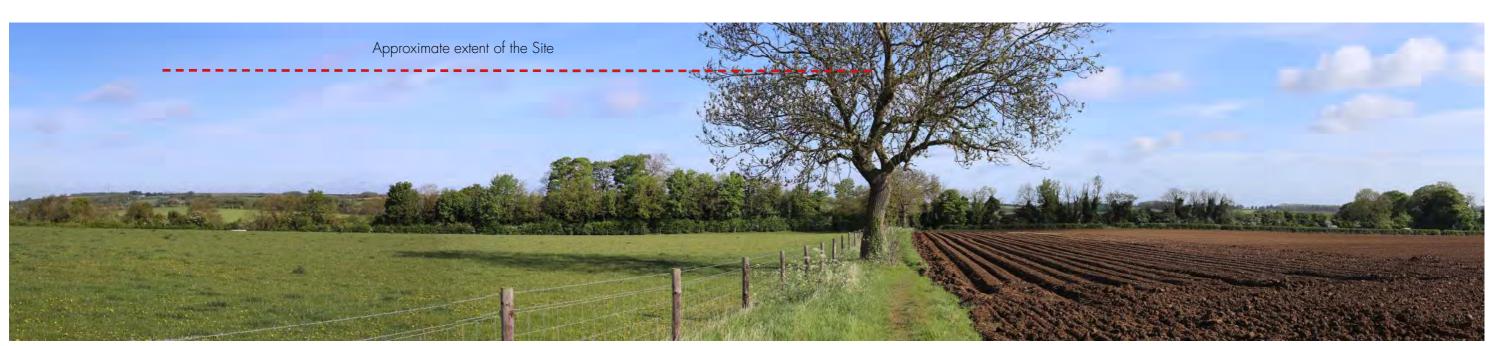
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Viewpoint 04 Wider Context View



Viewpoint 05 Wider Context View

Camera: Lens: Date:	Canon EOS 6D EF 50mm 1:1.8 03.05.2020		
OS Grid Reference: Distance to Site	VP01 VP02 VP03 VP04 VP05	SK 98894 43643 SK 99020 43604 SK 98734 43871 SK 99021 43271 SK 98728 43725	0m 30m 191m 300m 0m

These views are representative of visual receptors at this location. They are for information purposes only and are not to scale. Scaled images can be provided upon request.

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Viewpoint 12 Wider Context View



Viewpoint 13 Wider Context View

Viewpoint and Camera Details:

Camera:	Canon EOS 6D		
Lens:	EF 50mm 1:1.8		
Date:	03.05.2020		
Time/ OS Grid Reference: Distance to Site/ Elevation	VP07 VP08 VP09 VP10 VP11 VP12 VP13	SK 98771 44015 SK 98534 44248 SK 98085 44782 SK 97879 45099 SK 98385 44894 TF 00367 45583 TF 00213 45834	219m 543m 1239n 1623n 1172n 2306n 2615n

These views are representative of visual receptors at this location. They are for information purposes only and are not to scale. Scaled images can be provided upon request.

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Midlands Office

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