Updated LVIA Statement

Anzio Camp, Buxton Road, Blackshaw Moor, Leek, Staffordshire ST13 8TL

Our ref: LS6155/AC/ULVIA/da/01D

Date : 25th June 2015

1 Summary

1.1 Douglas Allenby BA (Hons) BLD CMLI RMaPS is a partner at Landscape Matters, which is a chartered landscape design and landscape management consultancy. He has 30 years' experience in the landscape profession. He was instructed by the client to undertake an Updated LVIA (Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment) of the proposed development in the summer of 2014. As part of that work a landscape site survey was carried out on 3rd September 2014. On the same day Andy Maw (Andy Maw Associates), also a qualified landscape architect and visualisation expert, undertook a photographic survey of the nine approved viewpoints as part of his work to update the photomontages. Also as part of the team Dave Frost (Dryad Tree Services), a qualified arboriculturalist with many years of experience within the Derbyshire and Staffordshire area, undertook a separate site visit to assess the quality of the existing tree cover and to subsequently produce an updated Tree Cascade chart. Working closely with these two professionals together with the project architects (Corporate Architects), ecologists (SLR Consulting), and planners (Tyler Parkes) Landscape Matters was able to assist in developing and then assessing how the proposed scheme might impact on the site as well as its surroundings in terms of its visual and landscape facets.

1.2 The Updated LVIA statement written by Douglas Allenby should be read in conjunction with the following landscape related drawings which they also produced (together with supporting drawings from the other disciplines) :-

Tree Survey (Drwg LS6155/P/L101-)
Tree Removal Proposals (Drwg LS6155/P/L102C)
Landscape Design Proposals (Drwg LS6155/P/L103F)
Draft Landscape Management Plan (Drwg LS6155/P/L104D)
Soft Landscape (Drwg LS6155/P/L105B) – Leisure Development Eastern Section
Soft Landscape (Drwg LS6155/P/L106C) – Care Development Central Section
Soft Landscape (Drwg LS6155/P/L107D) – Care Development Western Section
Bund Extension (Drwg LS6155/P/L111B)

1.3 The 'brownfield' redevelopment of the former Anzio Camp is an exciting opportunity which Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC) approves of in principle in terms of the proposed care / live work / leisure mix. A previous application in 2012 has however been refused due in part over concerns by the local authority (Staffordshire Moorlands DC) to the perceived impact of such a development on the character and appearance of the Special Landscape Area (SLA) and the Peak District National Park (PDNP). Specific issues related to the following:-

- The amount of tree loss
- The time needed for the periphery woodland planting to take effect
- The closeness of buildings to the boundary and the cutting into of the southern bund

1.4 These concerns have been addressed during the current design process such that from the LVIA of the current proposals our conclusions are that :-

- There will inevitably be some tree loss but this will be undertaken such that the existing principal woodland landscape structure will not be detrimentally affected and neither will external views.
- A significant amount of new tree and shrub planting will take place both in advance of the construction phase as well as towards the end of the site works. This will contain both a proportion of large select standard trees and smaller more juvenile stock to provide an immediate visual effect and give the new planting the maximum survival opportunity. There should therefore not be a significant time lag between the planting going into the ground and the enhanced landscaping making a significant visual contribution to the landscape setting.
- The Care Homes have been designed so that they do not in the main encroach closer to the southern boundary than the existing buildings. This together with the fact that the southern bund will be retained in its entirety and that this will be further softened with woodland tree and shrub planting at the top and bottom of the slope will minimize the visual impact of the scheme when viewed from Buxton Road.
- Bearing in mind the landscape related factors identified within the Churnet Valley Landscape Character Assessment report, the National Planning Policy Framework, and the Core Strategy :-
  - The existing vegetation structure will be largely retained
  - New woodland planting will be undertaken using appropriate native species to enhance the strong landscape structure
  - Existing hedgerows will be better maintained and a large number of inter-connected new native hedgerows will be established
  - The existing meadows will be retained and enhanced through better land management and the extent of this habitat will be increased as a new meadow will be established on an adjacent and connected section of the site.
  - The aquatic habitats (pond and ditches) will be better managed and restored for visual and ecological benefits
  - The proposed development will be of an appropriate scale and constructed using appropriate materials such that it will nestled into the sloping site and surrounded by mature trees.
  - Due to the adoption of a landscape management plan all of the existing and new habitats will be maintained in an appropriate and sustainable manner.
  - The National Park's protected landscape and scenic beauty will not be impacted upon.
  - The quality of the surrounding countryside will not be adversely affected by the proposed development.

1.5 The proposed development, in conjunction with the implementation of the proposed draft landscape management plan, will have a beneficial effect. When all aspects of the scheme are considered in the round the proposed scheme should be considered positively both as a

sustainable development in its own right and an entirely appropriate use for what currently is an unmanaged former military establishment. The evidence provided clearly demonstrates that, unlike the previous 2012 application, the new scheme proposals will in no way *'significantly open up the site from close and wider viewpoints and result in considerable visual impact'* nor will it have an *'unduly prominent, urbanising, and harmful impact on the character and appearance of the Special Landscape Area'* as stated in the planning decision.

2 Site Context

2.1 The Special Landscape Area (SLA) and Peak District National Park (PDNP)

2.1.1 Due to the fact that the site lies within open countryside and is located both within the former Special Landscape Area and close to the Peak District National Park it is considered a sensitive rural landscape setting. As such the Council wish to ensure that the proposed scheme does not result in an *'unduly prominent, urbanising, and harmful impact on the character and appearance of the Special Landscape Area which virtually borders the Peak District National Park'*. It should be noted however that from a planning policy perspective the SLA contained in the SMDC Local Plan of 1998 no longer applies since its replacement by the Core Strategy of 2014.

2.1.2 In terms of the National Park whilst at its closest point its boundary is only some 600m away to the north there are no direct views from there to the site due to the intervening topography and vegetation. The nearest elevated positions from within the PDNP are to the north on the Roaches (viewpoints 8 and 9) and to the north-west above Meerbook (viewpoint 3) both of which are some 2.5km away. Currently the former two and two and a half storey military buildings on the site are almost imperceptible from these distant viewpoints due to the distances involved, the number of on-site trees, and the perceived limited mass and height of the buildings (together with their recessive colour selection of materials). The notable exception however is the large white maintenance workshop adjacent to the Buxton road which noticeably draws the eye when seen from the PDNP and the wider countryside (viewpoints 2 and 5).

2.1.3 South of the PDNP the Churnet Valley Landscape Character Assessment (2011) describes the site as falling within :-

Character Type Area 5 - Ancient Slope and Valley Farmlands and sub-area 5b relating to East Leek. Its key characteristics are :-

- *Strongly undulating or sloping landscape cut by small scale steep sided stream valleys*
- *Small scale mainly ancient irregular fields bounded by trees, hedgerows and dry stone walls*
- *Extensive views from higher ground between gaps in vegetation.*
- *Intimate wooded valleys*

The site, due to its size, extent of development, tree planting, and previous military usage, is not typical of the Area 5 landscape characteristics. It does not contain small scale steep sided stream valleys, small scale irregular fields, or dry stone walls. It is probably closest to being a sloping landscape, bounded by trees, and visually linked more to the intimate wooded valleys lower down the hillside to the west associated with The Coppice and the woodland adjacent to Tittesworth Reservoir.

Also within the Landscape Character Assessment report :-

Vegetation (Clause 4)

Narrow woodland belts of ash, oak and alder follow the streams creating a ribbon effect on the landscape which reinforces the vegetation cover of the farmland. Hedgerows mainly form field boundaries although these can be poorly maintained, left tall with frequent gaps. Infrequent small blocks of woodland are often associated with farmsteads and isolated dwellings. Tree cover within the valleys softens the landscape and limits views. There are a good number of ash, oak and especially alder on the site (although not associated with streams) together with some large atypical mature Beech and hybrid Poplar species. There are few hedgerows on-site with the exception of a boundary hedge adjacent to the A53 and a further hedgerow associated with a ditch that runs in an east-west direction up the inner northern boundary. The amount of woodland cover both on site and to the west (The Coppice) is unusually high for Area 5.

Landscape Change/Incongruous Landscape Features (Clause 12)

'The disused army base in the north of the sub area at Blackshaw Moor is an incongruous feature within the landscape and can be seen from the A53 and surrounding roads'. This highlights the intrusiveness of the current site which needs to be addressed.

Opportunities(Clause 13c)

- *'Development opportunity associated with the disused army base'.*

Threats(Clause 13d)

- *'Abandonment of the disused army base at Blackshaw Moor'*.

The longer the former camp remains disused the greater the impact will be on the Area's landscape character.

From the site visits undertaken during 2012 and 2014 together with photographic records dating back to 2008 it is evident that due to a lack of management the buildings and the on site vegetation are deteriorating in quality and the site has the air of dilapidation which is particularly noticeable when driving passed the former main entrance on the A53.

Landscape Planning Guidelines (Clause 15)

Some limited woodland planting of a small scale is appropriate in this landscape, from field corner to small field size, tying into the existing woodlands and hedgerows with attention to edge detail and predominantly of a broadleaved character.

Rather than limited woodland planting the military undertook a considerable amount of such planting to help conceal operations within. It was comprised of broadleaved species although not necessarily of locally appropriate native varieties.

Land Management Guidelines(Clause 16)
Hedgerows/Dry Stone Walls - It is highly important that ancient and diverse hedgerows, particularly those with hedgerow trees along them, are maintained and managed. Where hedgerows are planted or restored they should be species rich reflecting local indigenous hedge mixes and that the plants where possible should be grown locally.

Pasture Land and Horsiculture - Consideration should be given to how good pastoral land management practices can be encouraged and monitored in relation to maintaining the quality of the grassland habitats. This can include rotational grazing with some cropping of hay meadows, maintenance of ditches and restocking of hedgerows.

Ponds and Ditches - It is most important that water bodies and catchments be maintained and enhanced and where possible the number of water bodies is increased.

Streams - It is highly important that the quality of all natural existing stream and channel features are maintained. The quality and quantity of water should be improved where possible.

Since the closure of the Anzio Camp landscape management operations have ceased with the result that :-

- the hedgerows have not been trimmed, and in places have been allowed to deteriorate into a gappy row of hedgerow 'trees'.
- The dry stone wall along the eastern boundary has not been repaired or maintained.
- Both areas of extensive meadow in the north-east and north-west corners of the site have been left untouched such that the floristic richness of them is deteriorating.
- A former small pond has silted up and become overgrown with encroaching willow. The ditches are heavily shaded.

The existing landscape structure is therefore being eroded and in a worsening condition due to neglect.

Clause 4.11(main text)
'Where new development is considered appropriate consideration should be given to the features of the landscape character type sub area and to the more immediate landscape setting. The scale of the development should reflect the scale of the surrounding landscape. Careful consideration should be given to boundary treatments ensuring that the vegetation structure of the existing site and its environs are either strengthened or protected and that any new planting carried out as part of the proposals is sympathetic with the local landscape. Where the existing landscape structure is eroded and in a poor condition, new

development can provide the opportunity for creating a strong new landscape structure. Plant material should where possible contribute towards local habitats and to the land management guidelines identified for the relevant landscape character type. Open space can be used to create views out to the surrounding countryside; with appropriate tree and shrub planting to act as a buffer between development and the adjacent countryside; and create strong new defensible boundaries to settlements'.

These guidelines appear apposite and have been taken on board during the design process and as part of the LVIA.

2.1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) March 2012 provides key guidance in the form of :-

Para 14 – *'At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking'*.

Para 61 – *'Although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment'*.

Clause 115 - confirms that *'great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty'.* There is however no reference to local landscape designations such as SLAs or Landscape Character Assessment areas.

2.1.5 Staffordshire Moorlands Adopted Core Strategy (March 2014) also provides important guidance relevant to this scheme. Notably :-

Core Policy SS6c – Other Rural Areas Area Strategy - *Enhance and conserve the quality of the countryside by…Giving priority to the need to protect the quality and character of the area and requiring all development proposals to respect and respond sensitively to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape;*
Encouraging measures which protect and enhance the biodiversity, geological resources and heritage of the District.

Regenerate underused major developed areas in the countryside by….Identifying major developed areas through the Site Allocations DPD at…Anzio Camp, Blackshaw Moor – uses which may be suitable are employment, extra care housing, tourist accommodation;

Development of these areas shall …..also avoid or minimize environmental impacts and congestion and safeguard and enhance natural and cultural assets.

Core Policy DC3 - Landscape and Settlement Setting - *The Council will protect and, where possible, enhance local landscape and the setting of settlements in the Staffordshire Moorlands by:*
1. Resisting development which would harm or be detrimental to the character of the local and wider landscape or the setting of a settlement and important views into and out of the settlement as identified in the Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment;
2. Supporting development which respects and enhances local landscape character and which reinforces and enhances the setting of the settlement as identified in the Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment;
3. Supporting opportunities to positively manage the landscape and use sustainable building techniques and materials which are sympathetic to the landscape;
4. Identifying through the Site Allocations DPD and protecting from inappropriate development, areas of visual open space where the intention will be to retain the land's open and undeveloped appearance.
5. Recognizing and conserving the special quality of the landscape in the Peak District National Park, and ensuring that development does not adversely affect the wider setting of the National Park.

Core Policy C3 - Green Infrastructure - *The Council will, through partnership working with local communities, organizations, landowners and developers, develop an integrated network of high quality and multi-functional green infrastructure that will:*
Link existing and potential sites of nature conservation value and historic landscape features, create new wildlife habitats, increase biodiversity, and increase tree cover where it is appropriate to the landscape;
Enhance the natural, man-made and cultural features that are crucial to the local landscape and create opportunities for the restoration of degraded landscapes and the enhancement of the urban fringe.

3 Viewpoints and visualizations

3.1 **Introduction –**In 2008 as part of a previous planning application for the major redevelopment of the Anzio Camp site it was agreed with SMDC that, given the size of the landholding and its potential after uses, an assessment of its landscape and visual impact would be necessary. Nine representative viewpoints were agreed with the local authority (some of which were in the National Park and the remainder within the former SLA). These same viewpoint locations were reviewed and agreed that they should be repeated under a second separate application in 2012. As part of the current application discussions were again held with the Council and as before it was agreed that these remained apposite.

It should be noted that with the three applications slightly different photographic recording and visualization processes have been carried out :-

2008 – Both summer and winter 'existing' photographs were taken from all 9 viewpoints. These were then used to help generate summer and winter Year 1 and Year 15 visualizations.

2012 – Due to project programme constraints only 2012 summer 'existing' photographs were taken. Copies of the 2008 existing winter photographs were reused for the winter visualizations despite the fact that some changes to the maturing vegetation were evident. It was considered by all parties at the time that this was not significant enough to jeopardize their validity. Year 1 and Year 15 visualizations were then produced but given that some views were becoming obscured by vegetation not all of the nine viewpoint visualizations were rendered.

2014 – Given similar programme constraints to the 2012 application only an existing summer 2014 photographic record could be made. Reference has been made back to the 2008 winter existing photographs but they have been deemed largely superfluous since over the intervening 6 year period the existing vegetation has matured considerably and new on-site natural regeneration has begun to establish around the boundaries. Consequently only summer Year 1 visualizations have been produced for all nine viewpoints; some summer Year 15 visualizations have been generated where there is considered to be a noticeable difference; and only distant winter visualizations have been produced since these are least affected by maturing vegetation growth.

3.2 **Updated LVIA**

This Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) report looked afresh at these 9 existing viewpoints and how they might be impacted by the proposed development at Year 1 and Year 15 (see Appendix One for the visualizations and Appendix Two for the method statement). During the pre-application process the Landscape Officer (Steve Massey) at SMDC accepted that the visualizations would be sufficient in themselves and did not request that the original 2008 EIA report be updated in full.

The visualizations largely 'speak for themselves' and appear to clearly indicate that from the majority of the close and far distant views the proposed scheme would complement its surroundings. Taking these viewpoints in turn and comparing from the photographic record how the site appeared in 2008 as against how in 2014 'before' and 'after' the proposed development might look :-

'Vw' - viewpoint
'2008' – how the existing Camp appeared in the landscape in 2008 (LVIA 2008)
'Existing' – how the existing camp appeared in September 2014
'Yr 1' – what the likely visual impact would be in the first year after completion of the Proposed Scheme
'Yr 15' – what the likely visual impact would be 15 years after completion of the Proposed Scheme
'Concl.' – Overall significance of visual impact ('neutral - slight – moderate – substantial' range for either beneficial or negative effects).

Vw	2008	Existing 2014	Yr 1	Yr 15	Concl.
1	Just make out two storey buildings in far distance	Cemetery tree growth obscures views of the buildings	Not visible	Not visible	**Neutral**
2	Main camp area well screened but white maintenance workshop building highly prominent	Workshop building remains visually prominent	Removal of the workshop building beneficial; due to long distance roof-scape indiscernible	Maturing tree cover provides enhanced screening	**Slight beneficial impact (Yr1 & Yr 15)**
3	Main camp area well screened but white maintenance workshop building prominent	Workshop building remains visually prominent due to white roof / cladding	Removal of the workshop building beneficial; care village barely visible	Maturing tree cover provides an almost complete visual screen	**Slight beneficial impact (Yr1 & Yr 15)**
4	Upper two storey building partially visible in winter	Camp buildings barely visible	Not visible	Not visible	**Neutral**
5	Main camp area well screened but white maintenance workshop building highly prominent	Workshop building remains visually prominent; can make out roofs of upper area buildings	Removal of the workshop building beneficial; new roof-scape noticeable but muted slate colour minimizes intrusion	Maturing tree cover provides an almost complete screen	**Moderate beneficial impact (yr1) Substantial beneficial (yr15)**
6	Southern camp two storey roofs & windows visible above bund	Camp buildings remain visible	Minimal increase in building mass; muted roofscape; windows barely discernible unlike current situation; bunding retained in full	Maturing tree cover provides an effective screen	**Slight beneficial impact (yr1); Substantial beneficial (yr15)**
7	Military style frontage – fencing, prominent building close to entrance but well treed	Less 'military' due to maturing summer foliage and neglect but no maintenance has reduced its attractiveness	Set back cottages, retained trees; new planting and good maintenance; road junction improved	Maturing trees & hedgerows contains the development & provides an attractive frontage	**Slight beneficial impact (Yr1) Substantial beneficial impact (Yr 15)**
8	Camp barely visible; workshop building roof is discernible	Similar to 2008	Barely visible	Inconspicuous	**Slight beneficial impact**
9	Camp barely visible	Site not visible	Not visible	Not visible	**Neutral**

The conclusions that can be drawn from this assessment are that :-

- Long distance views from the National Park (or immediately adjacent to the boundary) towards the new development will in both Years 1 and 15 have a 'slight beneficial impact' (views 3 and 8); or 'neutral impact' (view 9) due in the main to the removal of the white maintenance workshop, the retention of a significant proportion of the tree cover on site, the restricted scale and height of the development, and the selection of muted roof and walling materials. The proposed development will therefore sit comfortably within the landscape and not have a deleterious effect on the Peak District National Park setting.

- Long distance views within the Ancient Slope and Valley Farmlands LCA Area towards the development will in Years 1 and 15 have 'neutral impact' (view 1); and a 'slight beneficial impact' (view 2) in Years 1 and Year 15; and a 'moderate beneficial impact' (view 5) in Year 1 improving to 'substantial beneficial' by Year 15. The proposed development will not therefore generate *'considerable visual impact'* and will not have an *'unduly prominent, urbanising, and harmful impact on the character and appearance of the landscape character area when seen from a distance*.

- Closer views within the Ancient Slope and Valley Farmlands LCA Area towards the development will in Year 1 have either a 'no impact' (view 4) or a 'slight beneficial impact' (views 6 and 7). By Year 15 the situation will have improved to 'substantial beneficial' (views 6 and 7). The proposed development will, as its landscape begins to mature and is well managed, therefore have a positive visual impact on the LCA Area.

- Taken in the round, of the 9 viewpoints assessed :-

Year	**Neutral impact**	**Slight Beneficial**	**Positive Beneficial**	**Substantial Beneficial**
Year 1	3	5	1	
Year 15	3	3	-	3

- In light of all of the long and close viewpoint assessments it is our conclusion that the proposed scheme will make a positive contribution to the Ancient Slope and Valley Farmlands LCA and have no impact on the nearby Peak District National Park. It should also be noted that although for purposes of the visualizations it is standard practice to select Year 1 and Year 15 as appropriate time periods in reality on the ground the maturing existing and proposed vegetation, under normal growing conditions and with standard on-going maintenance, is likely to

move the scheme from 'slight beneficial' towards 'substantial beneficial' from Years 4 or 5 onwards.

3.3 Specific design details that will affect the visual appearance of the scheme

Whilst the retention of a high proportion of the existing tree cover, particularly along the site boundaries, will have a minimal visual impact on the surrounding LCA and PDNP the character of the 'Ancient Slope and Valley Farmlands' Type Area 5b does not rely solely on the nature and extent of that tree cover. As part of the overall masterplan and management plan for the appeal development the other key elements that would be addressed are :-

- The partially degraded Site of Biological Importance would be enlarged and restored (visually and ecologically).
- The damp meadow near the north boundary would be largely retained and restored. A proportion of it will be temporarily lost due to the creation of an acoustic bund in the north-east corner but the new bund slopes will have a wildflower meadow established upon them (using an appropriate selection of native species) that will merge into the retained damp meadow area.
- The retained trees and new native tree / shrub planting would be managed appropriately.
- Ditches and other water bodies would be managed for visual and ecological benefit.
- Existing hedgerows would be retained and managed; a substantial number of new native hedges and hedgerow trees will be planted within the site and along the northern and eastern boundaries to provide additional screening, and act as valuable wildlife corridors that link the existing woodland areas to the west and north-east.

The proposed scheme would therefore comply with the recommendations of the Churnet Valley Landscape Character Assessment and help to provide a development that retains and enhances the visual, landscape, and ecological value of the LCA.

3.4 Tree Loss

At the outset of the design process the extremely well treed nature of the site was noted and identified as a key factor along with the two meadow areas (N and NE) and the desire to keep significant development away from the potentially visually prominent upper elevated portion of the site. It was also considered essential to retain as much of the boundary tree planting as possible and southern bund completely intact to provide the essential framework for the scheme and to assimilate it into the surrounding landscape. Ideally as much of the tree cover in the central portion of the site should be retained to provide visual and ecological interest, and an 'instant' landscape structure for the new properties.

It was also quickly determined that to provide the most effective long term care development solution (given the advanced age and likely medical conditions of the new residents) the cottages and care buildings should all be either single or two storey.

This also had the likely benefit of minimizing the visual impact of the scheme in the wider landscape. In addition, to enable the inhabitants to gain the maximum benefit from the site as a whole the pathways should be set at a maximum gradient of 1 in 21.

The updated tree surveys identified that there are 680 blocks of trees (either individual specimens or groups) associated with the Anzio Camp site. In total there are probably therefore well over 750 trees in all. These vary considerably in quality and can be sub-divided as follows :-

Tree Category	***No.***	***% of total***
Category A	9	1
Category B	188	28
Category C	287	42
Category U	196	29
	680	100%

These figures clearly demonstrate that nearly three quarters (71%) of the existing trees are of poor quality and value (Categories U and C); with the bulk of the remainder (28%) being considered of moderate quality and value (Category B) and just 1% being of high quality and value. Therefore whilst there may be a significant level of tree cover on the site the vast majority of it is sub-standard due to a lack of arboricultural management, the type of species selected, the age of some of the species, tree spacings, climatic effects, and other factors such as squirrel damage / strimmer damage.

3.4.1 **Trees to be removed**

Great attention has been given to the design and layout of the proposed development both in terms of building and access layouts as well as associated gradients to enable future elderly or inform residents to navigate the site on foot or on mobility scooter without difficulty. As such the proposed loss of trees has been minimized as much as possible in order to provide an immediate attractive setting as well as retain them as ecological and landscape features in their own right. Some loss will however be inevitable given the nature of the development shown on the landscape masterplan. Out of a total of some 750 trees it is proposed that 234 will need to be removed i.e. approximately 30%. Although regrettable the effected trees have been selected such that approximately 82% would be of the lowest arboricultural grades (C and U) rather than the better quality specimens. Specifically the proposed tree felling would entail the following :-

Tree Category	***No.***	***% of total***
Category A	0	0
Category B	41	18
Category C	65	41
Category U	97	41
	234	100%

As part of the iterative design process specific attention was given to the physical distribution of where these losses would take place in order to ensure that potentially deleterious viewpoints were not opened up. As a consequence :-

Western boundary – The extensive belts of woodland and boundary hedgerows adjacent to the Buxton Road are to be retained intact apart from 6 off-site trees that will have to be removed to enable the improved road junction with central reservation to be constructed.

Northern boundary – the far northern boundary trees are to be retained in full. The inner northern boundary (on the south side of the lower damp meadow) that follows the line of a ditch as well as demarcating the extent of the proposed built development is to be retained almost completely. A minimal number of trees are proposed to be lost due to a) an acoustic bund, b) a new path access and c) causing excessive shading to rear gardens. In the previous planning application the potential noise pollution issue relating to the nearby Gun Club was to be addressed in part by means of a 6m high acoustic bund (with 1 in 3 slopes) located to the north of the proposed leisure complex. It was proposed to plant up the bund with native woodland tree and shrub species as well as native meadow grassland. Due to the position of the earth bund, its orientation, retention of adjacent trees, and proposed soft landscaping it was demonstrated that it would not be evident from the agreed viewpoint locations. Under the current application, for reasons given in the accompanying acoustics report, the original 130m long bund (described above) is to be retained as well as extended by a further 165m westwards, down the hillside, in order to provide an acoustics solution to the care development area. The earth bund extension will be constructed with site-won material (avoiding the need to import material) in a similar fashion to the original bund and landscaped to the same standard with native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers. The design varies slightly in one section (96m long), adjacent to the long stay leisure car park ('X' on the masterplan), where there is insufficient space available to provide a 1 in 3 slope gradient. In its place will be a vertical timber crib wall topped with timber fencing (for health & safety as well as acoustic reasons) which will be extensively planted up with climbers (Boston Ivy and native ivy). As Viewpoint 4 indicates (and this is the only viewpoint that is likely to be impacted upon) during the summer months the dense shelterbelt that runs along the north-west boundary of the site will effectively screen the proposed bund extension from view completely. During the winter, in the early years post-construction, the meadow covered bund should be largely inconspicuous, with possibly just the outline of the bund evident in places through the filigree of shelterbelt tree trunks and branches. Once the tree and shrub planting has established then the bund should recede further from view such that the likely long term impact should be negligible.

Eastern boundary – No tree loss is envisaged here.

Southern boundary – Trees would not be affected apart from a few in the upper south-east corner primarily due to the desire to restore the degraded pond.

Upper half of the site – By carefully siting the proposed log cabins and ensuring that new buildings are largely confined to existing building footprints the large numbers of mature trees will be retained.

Lower half of the site – Since this is where the majority of the proposed development would take place (and despite utilizing existing building footprints and roadways wherever possible) some trees would require removal although many of these are in the lowest quality categories. Those to be retained would be given sufficient space to enable new planting to be established nearby such that visually significant clumps of well managed tree and shrub vegetation could develop (e.g. east of cottages D4/5; south of D12; west of D16; south of D17/18; south of D25; north of D35; and east of D36). These retained clumps of mature vegetation will provide an immediate landscape framework to the new development both visually as well as structurally by providing key features into which the proposed landscape can be incorporated.

3.4.2 **Trees to be retained**

On completion of the felling works the quality and value of the retained tree cover will be improved as a proportion to that which currently exists, with a slightly higher percentage of Category B and C trees and a noticeably lower percentage of Category U trees retained for the future.

Tree Category	***Pre-felling Composition %***	***Post-felling Composition %***
Category A	<1	<1
Category B	28	31
Category C	42	47
Category U	29	21
	100%	100%

That said there will remain a less than desirable proportion of lower quality even aged trees which as the Tree Report has identified will require on-going creative management in accordance with standard arboricultural practice within the following 5 years - ideally once the new landscaping has had time to establish. This is likely to require the undertaking of thinning, coppicing, pollarding, and/or crown works (lifting / thinning) which would be agreed in advance with the local authority tree officer and incorporated into the Landscape Management Plan.

Extensive strips of natural regeneration (mainly comprised of common alder, ash and pedunculate oak) along the northern and southern boundaries will also be retained and creatively managed to help diversify the age class of trees on site and provide linkages to proposed woodland planting areas.

3.4.3 **Additional Planting**

In order to create an attractive new development environment that is in keeping with its surroundings the landscape masterplan (Drwg LS6155/P/L103F) proposes that significant new soft landscaping works be undertaken. In addition to shrub planting, wildflower meadow areas, and native hedgerow establishment, there would be a significant amount

of new native tree and shrub planting works to provide immediate landscape and visual impact. In terms of the latter the proposals would be implemented in two phases :-

i) advanced planting that would be undertaken prior to construction works commencing on site in order to enable the new trees and woodland shrubs to become well establish before the new development becomes operational and
ii) towards the end of the construction phase once the final landform and topsoiling have been implemented.

In terms of the advanced planting this has to be carried out in areas where construction work is not envisaged. As such it would be focussed in the following locations :-

Southern boundary – to reinforce the existing disjointed boundary trees and natural regeneration areas as well as soften the visual appearance of the proposed Care Home B when viewed from the Buxton Road.

Western boundary – to help compensate for anticipated tree loss within the existing tree belts new planting is proposed to provide additional screening of the Facilities building, and cottages D1 to D5 when viewed from the Buxton road, as well as for the Cottage users of D3 to D5 looking out towards the traffic using the Buxton Road.

In total the advanced planting will entail the establishment of :-

- 33 No. select standard native trees which will be 3 to 3.5m tall
- 1140m^2 of new native woodland tree and shrub planting which will be comprised of 80cm to 1250cm high tree species and 60cm to 80cm high shrub species. The total number of juvenile trees to be planted will be 162 No.

The final landscaping works towards the end of the construction phase will involve the planting of a further :-

- 215 No. select standard native trees (either within woodland planting blocks or associated with street and amenity open space planting)
- 10,407m2 of new native woodland tree and shrub planting resulting in a total number of juvenile trees of 741 No.

Structural tree species would be selected as follows :-

Quercus robur (Pedunculate oak), Carpinus betulus (Hornbeam), Alnus glutinosa (Common alder), Pinus sylvestris (Scots Pine), Betula pendula (Silver Birch), Acer campestre (Field Maple), Sorbus aucuparia (Rowan), and Prunus avium (Wild cherry).

3.4.4 **Conclusions on tree cover**

The Anzio site is well treed with the majority concentrated around the boundaries and within the upper eastern half. Due to the type, age, and spacing of the trees together with

a lack of management the majority (71%) are of poor quality and need attention regardless of the current application in the form of felling, thinning, and coppicing works.

Although some tree removal (234 No. out of approximately 750) would be required this would be carried out in locations that will retain the core planting blocks along the boundaries and upper eastern half in order to ensure that the visual impact from public highways, footpaths, and viewpoints will be minimal. Some 82% of the trees proposed to be removed would be of poor quality in order to ensure that more of the better quality specimens are retained as key components of the new landscape setting.

To help create an attractive and ecologically favourable environment for the proposed development and surrounding area a substantial amount of new tree and shrub planting is envisaged. This will entail both advanced planting works and further planting towards the end of the construction phase. In total this will comprise :-

248 No. select standard native trees for immediate visual impact and structure

903 No. juvenile native trees within the woodland planting blocks (total area 11,547m^2)

Total number of new trees therefore proposed will be 1151 No.

In light of the above twin track approach, of retaining as many of the better quality trees as possible and undertaking substantial new tree and shrub planting works, it is considered that whilst some tree loss is deemed inevitable, the resulting new landscape will be comprised of more new appropriate tree species on site than currently exist that will be visually and structurally more diverse, as well as safer which is important generally and particularly where elderly or infirm people will be known to be present.
The proposed Landscape Management Plan will also ensure that the existing as well as new tree and shrub planting (together with the other habitats, which include some 726 linear metres of new hedgerows) will be effectively and creatively managed in a sustainable manner for the long term.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The dilapidated former military camp is a brownfield site which, although generally well screened, does have a significant visual impact from certain locations, namely i) the large maintenance workshop building when approaching from the south along the A53 and from more distant views within the former SLA and the Peak District National Park; and ii) opposite the main entrance. Due to a lack of maintenance the key habitats, one of which is a Site of Biological Importance, are declining in ecological and visual value, and the quality of the tree cover is generally poor.
The proposed scheme would retain as much of the key boundary vegetation as possible, demolish the maintenance workshop, and by creating a new, vibrant, and sustainable care / leisure development eradicate the site's air of neglect.

By carefully noting the relevant attributes of the local landscape character and incorporating them into the design of the proposed scheme (through retention, management, and enhancement) the resulting landscape will develop into one that complements its setting. Due to the fact that the majority of the development would be a much needed care scheme great attention was paid to ensure that the design functioned efficiently from a practical perspective despite being on a challenging sloping site. Through the provision of appropriately designed care blocks and cottages, DDA compliant pedestrian access routes, and a stimulating external environment the new residents would be able to maximize the use and enjoyment of the site without the scheme being visually prominent from the surrounding landscape. It is acknowledged that a number of trees will need to be felled in order to create this exciting development but the majority of these are away from the boundaries, involve poor quality specimens, and will be replaced by more appropriate native tree and woodland planting. The combination of carrying out advance planting works together with select standard trees will make a positive immediate visual impact which will then be enhanced with additional extensive planting towards the end of the construction phase. These together with the other on site habitats will be creatively managed and maintained to a high standard for the long term.

APPENDIX TWO :

VISUALIZATION METHOD STATEMENT

Overview

A verified photomontage is a visual representation of a proposed development that is as accurate as it is possible to be within the limits of the technology used and the available data. Although it is not possible to achieve 100% perfect accuracy due to minor errors in survey work, environmental variables and photographic distortion, the careful implementation of a best practice method will result in only a negligible error.

The photomontage images represent how the proposed development would be perceived from a number of locations surrounding the site. These locations were chosen as the result of a detailed consideration of sensitive viewpoints. The photomontages and supporting method statement can be found respectively in Appendices One and Two.

The methods described in this document are based on current best practice and follow recommendations from The Landscape Institute's 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (3rd Edition – April 2013), specifically the advice note 'Photography and Photomontage in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (Jan 2011)

The entities responsible for the preparation of the views that are set out in the following pages comprise:

Surveying
DPS Surveys Ltd
48 Park Road
Henley-on-Thames
Oxfordshire
RG9 1DD

Photography, production and checking of photomontages/Production of partial site model
Andy Maw Design
Flat 3, 34 Belbroughton Road
Blakedown
Worcestershire
DY10 3JG

Supply of building models
Corporate Architecture Limited
Venari House,
1 Trimbush Way,
Market Harborough,
Leicestershire,
LE16 7XY

Methodology
Photography
During the field study, a photographic record was made to represent the full range of potential views towards the site from available viewpoints within the study area. These locations are mapped, the visual receptor types recorded and viewpoint context described. The majority of photographs have been taken from publically accessible locations; no private access was needed. The methodology ensures that the combination of camera and lens recreates as close as possible what can be seen by the human eye.

Equipment:
The aim of a verified photomontage is to illustrate what a proposed development may look like to a person standing at a specified photographic viewpoint. In order to create this effect, all photographs are taken with a camera and lens combination, resulting in a 'standard' focal length (equivalent to the cone of human vision). A standard focal length is usually considered to be in the range 45mm to 55mm on a traditional 35mm film camera. On digital cameras, where the image sensor is often smaller than the recorded image on traditional film cameras, the focal length of the lens used must compensate for the effective magnification resulting from the smaller sensor.

A Canon 5D Mark II full frame sensor camera was used for all viewpoints in conjunction with a Sigma 50mm prime macro lens (35mm format equivalent), which is within the 'standard' focal length range. The full frame sensor in the Canon 5D therefore, results in no magnification. Using such a macro lens ensures minimum distortion in the photograph in comparison to other 50mm prime lenses allowing better 'stitching' of panoramas. To eliminate the parallax error that occurs when taking panoramic images, a sliding plate on the tripod head was employed allowing the camera to be moved back along the line of sight so that the nodal point of the lens was positioned directly over the axis of rotation.

Image capture: The camera was mounted on a tripod using an Enduro PHQ Panoramic tripod head at 1.6m above ground level to simulate the view at eye level.

The orientation of the camera was adjusted so that the optical axis and the horizontal axis were aligned with the horizon. This is the 'astronomical' horizon as set by a gravity governed bubble level.

Images were captured in the camera's maximum quality jpeg mode. Camera settings were chosen carefully for each viewpoint; the camera was set to aperture priority mode, a small aperture of f/11 was used and the focus distance selected specifically to render all parts of the scene in focus. Supplementary photographs were taken where necessary to record the position that the camera was located.

Panoramas were deemed essential to show the maximum extent of the proposed development and so frames were taken at 20-degree intervals to allow for overlap (discussed below).

Photographs taken in the winter of 2008 determined the position of each viewpoint. Every effort was made to place the camera in the same position but it cannot be considered wholly accurate without GPS information from 2008 which was unavailable.

Post Production: The panoramas were manually stitched together using Adobe Photoshop software, rather than using a 'photo stitch' program, taking the central 50% horizontally of each single frame and discarding the 25% left and right hand edges (exhibiting the greatest distortion). These precautions minimize the small amount of optical distortion effect caused by the camera lens.
Images were imported as jpeg files and minor tonal and colour adjustments were made which aim to replicate the scene as honestly as possible as it was perceived by the photographer at the time of capture.

Survey
DPS Surveys were employed to gain accurate information of the camera and control point positions. The photographer met the surveyor on site and took GPS readings from the central tripod position that the camera was placed using a Leica GS08 GPS device, which achieved a 25mm degree of tolerance. This allowed the revisiting of any of the viewpoint locations at a later date and the same photograph could be taken in summer and winter.

Control Points:
Control points are surveyed points/objects that can clearly be identified on the photograph. Since they are included in the 3D model, they can be visually matched with the corresponding points on the photograph.

Control points were identified within each photograph and marked for the survey team to take measurements. A minimum of three control points were chosen, and five where possible of fixed features such as lamp-posts, trees and sign posts, as well as survey rods positioned in the photograph. Occasionally if available, control points taken from another viewpoint were also used for even more accurate positioning of the 3D model within the photograph. These control points were then created within the 3D program in the precise positions.

Control points were taken using laser technology (a Leica 1205 Total Station), which incorporates long range reflectorless electronic distance measuring equipment alongside the aforementioned Leica GS08 GPS device. As the viewpoints were mainly from rural locations, in the absence of enough fixed control points, a series of temporary survey rods were used at differing distances to facilitate the recording of survey points.

All survey measurements were supplied in CAD format for use in the 3D model.

3D Model

3D models were created and supplied which were then aligned within 3DS Max using the site masterplan to determine the X and Y position. Finished floor levels were then used to accurately position the 3D model vertically AOD (above ordnance datum).

Corporate Architecture provided the building models and were worked up to a higher level of detail by Andy Maw Design.

Andy Maw Design also created the new road layout in 3D along with proposed vegetation to allow for the production of viewpoint 7.

Camera Matching and Rendering

The process of camera matching (i.e. correctly assembling the perspective views within the 3D program to match those photographs taken on site) needs meticulous attention to detail.
The details of the Ordnance Survey co-ordinates for each viewpoint, and the angle of each view were also checked as part of the verification process.

The survey information was added into the 3D model and aligned precisely with the OS coordinate system. '3D' Cameras (or perspective views) were then created within 3DS Max at each of the viewpoint locations at the correct angles and raised by 1.6m to match the position at eye-level that was achieved during photography. The '3D' camera was then duplicated and rotated by 20 degrees to mirror the angle and number of frames taken within the panorama. The VRay lens distortion utility was then used to recreate the correct amount of distortion that the lens exhibits, and the data entered into 3DS Max.

A daylight system was then created within 3DS Max using the geographic location and time zone, then setting the correct time that the viewpoint was captured. This allows for the accurate creation of shadows as at the time of taking the photograph.

3D control points were created to match those visible in each of the panoramas and positioned according to the survey data. Any atmospheric conditions experienced at the time of taking the photograph were added to the model. For example, haze or reflected sunlight.

Draft 'clay rendered' images (i.e. Renders using one simple material) of the 3D model were produced by rendering the camera-matched viewpoints within 3DS Max at the same size as the digitised existing views. Using Adobe Photoshop each draft image was 'stitched' using exactly the same process as was achieved with the photographs to create draft panoramas. The draft images were then added to the existing panoramas and aligned using the control points as a reference.

The scaled and positioned clay-rendered images were then used as a template for the addition of more detailed components. Accurate materials were added to the 3D model, settings adjusted, and the rendering process repeated to produce fully rendered versions of the 3D model. These were then 'stitched' and aligned to the draft image.

Post production

Care was taken to mask out elements of the 3D model that may be obscured by foreground objects and photographic vegetation was added to simulate the proposed soft landscaping that would be seen within the panorama at 1 and 15 years.

Caveats

i. A photomontage can never be considered as a 100% accurate representation of what would be seen due to the large number of variables affecting the images from the photography to the limitations of the 3D programs. They should be used as an aid to the decision making process.

ii. The winter photomontages cannot be considered as 'verified views' as they have been produced using photographs in 2008. Verification cannot be made on the methodology used to stitch the photographs

and as precise GPS co-ordinates were not taken this means that the photomontage accuracy cannot be guaranteed.

Further to this the landscape has changed somewhat in the six years since the photographs were taken meaning a present day reflection is not fully represented. These visualizations should be only be considered as a representation.

References
All photomontages were created in accordance with recommendations given in the following publications:

Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition - April 2013), published by The Landscape Institute Visual Representation of Windfarms, Good Practice Guidance, published by Scottish Natural Heritage (2006).