SMDC Planning Reference –	SMD 2025 0243		
Site Name –	Land off Manifold Drive, Cheadle. Outline Housing Application		
Summary of proposals -	Residential Application – up to 50 units		
Consultation Note Subject –	Landscape and Visual Matters		
Planning Case Officer –	Chris Johnston		
Landscape Comments Prepared By –	Stuart Ryder of Ryder Landscape Consultants		
Date of site visit —	26/8/25	**Date of notes — v1**	12/10/25
Summary of anticipated landscape and visual effects	There will be a long-term ***Moderate, Adverse and Permanent*** landscape effect at the Site and ***Minor, Adverse*** wider effect in the contextual landscape with the proposals being associated with the existing housing along Manifold Drive. There are public viewing opportunities from Manifold Drive itself and the short roads running at 90 degrees off it and residents and users of these streets will experience the greatest visual change. All visual effects will be ***Adverse*** at a variety of levels. The greater visual effects are from Manifold Drive and the roads leading onto it. There are limited viewing opportunities back towards the Site from the more rural public footpaths set higher up the hillside to the south and west of the Site.		

Dear Chris

LAND OFF MANIFOLD DRIVE, CHEADLE – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL CONSULTATION

Thank you for appointing us to review the landscape and visual aspects of the submitted outline planning application. They are set down under the following headings;

1. Methodology
2. Site and surrounding's landscape character
3. Proposals for the site
4. Landscape effects
5. Visual effects from surrounding areas
6. Review of submitted LVIA
7. Design and management observations
8. Suggested planning conditions

1. Methodology

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC) appointed Ryder Landscape Consultants (RLC) to consider the submitted scheme and supporting documents in August 2025. Stuart Ryder an experienced Chartered Landscape Architect has reviewed the Site Plans as submitted, aerial photography and Staffordshire County Council's Online PRoW Map information before attending Site. At Site local paths were walked, including those that run along the higher land to the south of the Site and next to it in the residential areas off Manifold Drive.

2. Site and surrounding's landscape character

The Site appears almost as parkland with open ground trees set within pasture fields with flat bottomed tree canopies from horse and cattle grazing. It is open to Manifold Drive with a timber post and wire fence allowing good views to it and up the prevailing slope to the south to the generally wooded higher ground that acts as a backdrop to the view. The site contributes positively to the generally scenic

character of the urban edge at this point of Cheadle. As well as trees set within the middle of fields there are good specimens set in native hedgerows that sub-divide the proposed Site.

Using the cardinal points of the compass the adjacent areas that form the landscape context to the Site and with which it is judged are;

- ***North*** – Manifold Drive with its collection of bungalows and two storey dwellings with a mix of orientations towards the Site. A series of river named streets lead up to Manifold Drive – Eden Grove, Avon Grove and Derwent Drive and the Site is evident at the end of these streets that are aligned on it.
- ***East*** – Of the Site lies Rakeway Manor and a series of six contemporary houses as three semi-detached properties fronting onto Rakeway. The amount of hard standing to the front of these new properties appears uncharacteristic and does not contribute to the frontage of Rakeway as a rural road climbing up the hill to the south. Other houses are generally more separated on the road and with more curtilage space.
- ***South***– lie further pasture fields, again like the Site edged with native hedgerow and carrying a good tree stock. The fields rise to Rakeway House Farm that is passed by PRoW Cheadle 7 that runs to the north of the farm and allows some views north towards the settlement of Cheadle.
- ***West*** – lie more pasture fields and the equestrian facilities around Cheadle Equestrian Centre. There is a straight access track running up the centre with a tall native hedge to its east side that generally separates this land to the west from the Site fields both visually and perceptually.

The Site is a rural landscape in character and as stated at the start of this descriptive section has certain parkland like character and appearance. It is a positive and scenic edge to Cheadle and acts as an attractive landscape setting to this edge of the town.

I would not class the Site or the surrounding area as a 'valued landscape' as per NPPF Para 187 a) definition, but it is the immediate piece of a scenic landscape that rise to the south of the Manifold Drive and is experienced from the lane and other streets that lead off it.

3. Proposals for the Site

Recognising that the scheme is in Outline and the proposals only show one arrangement for it the following elements can be reasonably discerned from the proposals.

That construction and the Site's future singular vehicle access is proposed from Manifold Drive;

- That houses are set within field units largely leaving inter-field hedgerow retained other than new access points;
- That the mature trees on Site are largely retained, albeit with a new setting containing the residential built form;
- That there is public open space (POS) towards the lower Manifold Drive northern side of the Site.
- That the POS would be utilised to accommodate SuDS features primarily attenuation basins.
- That a perimeter path appears to be set running through the POS but its drawn width makes it appear as wide as a road.
- The type of houses proposed are a mix of detached and semi-detached two storey houses. There does not appear to be any bungalows indicated, or any higher dwellings.

The levels on the development platforms indicate that the first three bungalows would be set at 161 to 165m AOD with a typical change of level being 2m across the Site. The ground tends to rise more noticeably beyond the Site field.

4. Landscape effects

The landscape at the Site and in its setting is not included in any national or local landscape designations, nor does it form the immediate setting to the Peak District National Park. It is outside of Built-up Area limits for Cheadle and is therefore classed as Countryside and subject to Policy SS10 – Other Rural Areas Strategy and Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan – 2014-2033 as well as NPPF 187 b) directions regarding the consideration of the intrinsic qualities of countryside.

Other applicable Local Plan policies include:

- DC1 – Design Considerations
- DC3 – Landscape & Settlement Setting
- C3 – Green Infrastructure
- NE2 – Tree, Woodland & Hedgrows

The Site forms part of the 'Important Landscape Setting to Settlement' for Cheadle to the south east of the town. These Important Landscape Settings are described within the Landscape and Settlement Character Assessments (LSCA) for the towns and larger villages (2008) as:

"Areas of landscape setting were determined partly on the ground and with reference to the landscape character assessment, aerial photographs and OS 1st edition plans. Landscape that is identified as being important to the setting of a town or village is typical of the character of the landscape type for the locality. The original field pattern, form of enclosure, vegetation cover and scale of the landscape is often largely intact in these areas."

It is not technically a local level of Landscape Designation as there has not been a systematic review of landscape character to arrive at a judgement. There are no local landscape designations to make. However it is important to note that the south east side of Cheadle is specifically identified in the LSCA and described as:

'The area to the south east of Cheadle is a small scale landscape with strong vegetation along field boundaries it is an area of important landscape setting for the settlement.'

The boundary to define where the south east of Cheadle lies is not marked on any plans in the LSCA but it is a fair and reasonable conclusion to class the Site's landscape as being to the south east of the town and generally small in scale.

The proposals will effectively turn the 2 / 3 fields into a linear development of residential built form. The ability to retain most of the trees and hedgerows along the Site's boundaries will retain one of the Site's primary landscape assets but the built form will reduce its openness and connectivity to the rural wooded backdrop to the south..

The proposed buildings will be perceived as 'pulled-back' from Manifold Drive given the proposed POS to the lower north side of the Site. However this POS will appear narrow when compared to the current sense of space, it will be backed by the new built form and be crossed by the development's sole vehicular access. However its formation does allow the retention of the willow trees along the Manifold Drive boundary.

Of some concern regarding the use of the POS is the amount of indicated SuDS features. It is both logical and a necessity to place attenuation basins on lower ground within a development but their long-term appearance can appear unsightly and ill-kept and this relates back to their detailed design and ease of maintenance. I am concerned that they would appear as engineered structures with standard bank gradients, ubiquitous headwalls and limited lack of public useability other than occasionally holding

waters. These features should not be classed as POS unless their design can be shown to be useable as parkland. If a more ecological approach is adopted for the attenuation basin and their area is put forward as habitat for BNG calculations then the potentially unattractive character of the basins in winter and early spring needs to be recognised.

The proposals will reduce the quality of the current urban edge to Cheadle by removing the sense of parkland that can currently be gained from Manifold Drive. The upper part of the wooded slope and wider setting to the town would still be appreciable above the new properties but the sense of open connectivity between Manifold Drive and the open countryside to the south would be lost.

The new housing would not generally affect the character of Rakeway Road to the east with it 'housed' behind the existing Rakeway Manor and the neighbouring three properties on the road. There may be a sense of additional development beyond the existing properties but not to a sufficient level that would alter its character as a rural route entering and leaving Cheadle.

To the south the existing pasture fields associated with Rakeway House Farm would still appear and ideally be operated as agricultural pasture but there will be the presence of houses closer to the farm buildings reducing the sense of rural setting for the farm.

The land to the west would largely be unaffected given the degree of existing separation provided by hedges and trees in that direction particularly the strong, high hedge to the east side of the access track to Cheadle Equestrian Centre.

Overall I consider the landscape effects for the Site to be **Major/Moderate, Adverse and Temporary** during the time of construction and at Year 1 on completion – this is based on a Medium landscape sensitivity and a Large Magnitude of effect. Over time reducing with plant establishment and aging of building materials to a **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent**. The landscape effects in the contextual landscape are assessed to be **Moderate, Adverse and Temporary** to begin with reducing to **Moderate/Minor, Adverse and Permanent.** The proposals will extend the built form of Cheadle out into the sensitive landscape setting to the south east of the settlement but it will not appear as an extensive encroachment given the lack of public locations where the extension can be appreciated

5. Visual effects from surrounding areas

Five sets of visual receptors have been considered that have views back to the Site from publicly accessible areas. Also included in the list are views from the nearest residential receptors on Manifold Drive itself and Rakeway Manor. The phrase road users covers both vehicle users and pedestrians along the highway footpaths.

- Road users along Manifold Drive;
- Road users on Eden Grove, Avon Grove and Derwent Drive;
- Road users on Rakeway;
- Footpath users on Cheadle 7; and
- Residents of Manifold Drive.

The visual change experienced by each group is discussed below.

Road users on Manifold Drive will have oblique views along the front of the proposals in both direction of travel. They will experience an increased sense of development and built form even with the POS to the south side of the road as the new homes will be clearly evident in the view as well. The current visual connectivity to the wooded hill side to the south would be removed with the insertion of the new houses into the view. This change to their view has been initially judged as a ***Major/Moderate, Adverse***

and Temporary effect (Medium sensitivity & Large Magnitude of effect) reducing to a ***Moderate, Adverse and Permanent*** effect (Medium sensitivity & Medium Magnitude of effect).

Road users on Eden Grove, Avon Grove and Derwent Drive have their views aligned along these short streets to align on the Site itself. They will see a portion of the development rather than the whole Site at the end of their views where currently they experience an open field with tree cover. This change to their view has been judged as a ***Moderate, Adverse and Temporary*** effect (Medium sensitivity and Medium magnitude of change) with the potential through mitigation planting at the end of their views to reduce to ***Minor, Adverse and Permanent***.

Road users on Rakeway will experience partial oblique views to the east end and broader southern side of the proposals and these are generally taken through existing vegetation and passed the existing properties on Rakeway. The proposed properties would more likely be visible in winter months. This change to the view is initially assessed as **Moderate/Minor, Adverse and Temporary** and likely staying at this level as there appears to be little additional mitigation planting to the south or eastern sides of the proposals.

Footpath users on Cheadle Footpath 7 – There are partial views from this PRoW where intervening hedgerows have gaps within them towards the Site. Where visible the southern edge of the proposals would make it appear that Cheadle is expanding outwards up the hill towards the rural, pasture fields that this path passes through. Views to the north are intermittent but will be more evident in the winter months. The visual change is assessed as **Moderate, Adverse and Temporary** (Medium/High sensitivity and Medium/Small Magnitude of change) but could be reduced to **Minor, Adverse and Permanent** if more screen planting is introduced to the southern side of the proposals.

Residents of Manifold Drive – there would be a variety of effects experienced all dependent on whether the properties are single or two storey, their orientation and state of plant maturity in their gardens. Residential receptors have a high degree of visual sensitivity even though they can see neighbouring houses in a view and will cherish the view south up the hill, even if they cannot see it directly from their properties and gardens. Where evident the change in view is assessed as **Major/Moderate, Adverse and Temporary** (Medium/High sensitivity and Medium/Large Magnitude of change) for the significantly affected residents that would reduce to **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** with the establishment of intervening vegetation and toning down of building materials in the proposed development.

Taken as a whole the visual effects will be noticeable by local people and particularly the residents of Manifold Road but not reach such a level of intrusion or dominance that they can be classed as causing significant visual harm. There will also be a reduction in the visual amenity and distinctiveness of the area with scenic fields holding cattle and horses changed to a fringe of POS next to houses. My concern about the appearance and upkeep of the SuDS attenuation basins should they be proposed adjacent to Manifold Drive is reiterated as this would be the 'front of house' of the development by which it is judged.

6. Review of submitted LVIA

The application was accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) produced by Tyler Grange with report reference TG Report No. 1399_R03a_OK_CW dated 6th <ay 2025. This LVIA figures were reviewed prior to attending Site for background information and to understand which landscape and visual receptors had been considered by the Applicant's professional advisors.

The photography within the LVIA is winter photography which shows the maximum level of visibility towards the Site without leaf cover. This was useful as my own site visit was in August with full

canopies. After attending Site and looking at the range of viewpoints taken and the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) indicated I would not suggest any further should be considered or reported on as representative viewpoints.

There are no concerns to express about the general methodological approach used to produce the LVIA as it is consistent with the Landscape Institute's Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Third Edition (GLVIA3). I am familiar with the Tyler Grange methodology after reviewing a number of different applications and they do not generally consider new build houses as automatically unattractive features within a landscape.

From a landscape effects point of view the Site is considered to a Medium landscape sensitivity based on the assessed Medium Value and Medium Susceptibility. I agree with this assessment. I also agree that the proposals would have a Major/Moderate, Adverse effect at Year 1 reducing to Moderate at Year 15 for the Site landscape. There is no assessment of landscape effects on the contextual landscape but the wider Landscape Character Type (LCT) Ancient Slope and Valley Farmland is assessed at Moderate/Minor at Year 1 & 15 which is a reasonable judgement.

However there is a point worth noting from Paragraph 9.4 of the conclusions that refers to the supply of a detailed landscaping scheme as set as a digital extract below.

> 9.4. The LVIA undertaken illustrates that the Proposed Development is of a scale and in-keeping with the landscape character and is appropriate to its surroundings. In accordance with policy, the application was accompanied by a detailed landscaping scheme that clearly demonstrates how new development will create positive Green Infrastructure linkages and contribute to the local landscape and townscape.

There has been no detailed landscaping scheme supplied and even if there had it is an Outline Application meaning it could be subject to change. As explained above in Section 4 I have particular concerns about the use of the POS for so much SuDS infrastructure as indicated.

Turning to the visual effects the LVIA reports a series of Major, Adverse effects for local residents listing those on Manifold Drive, Eden Grove, Avon Grove and parts of Derwent Drive, Rakeway Grange at Year 1 as Major declining to Major/Moderate, Adverse. This appears fair as an assessment. However, in the conclusions at 9.6 it is described as,

'on a very limited number of residential receptors situated to the east of the Site'

I do not consider the number of receptors 'very limited' which suggests a lower number than occurs and I think it would be more accurate to describe the residential receptors being to the north and east of the Site.

Section 9.6 also concludes that the proposals would be seen and judged with the existing built form of Cheadle which I agree with. It goes onto explain that the new south-eastern edge of Cheadle would be defined by a *' a species-rich hedgerow with mature trees'*. This as I explain in Section 7 I do not consider a particular robust boundary to any new development edge.

Section 7 is where I turned to understand how the LVIA had influenced the proposals as presented and how they have fed through to the landscape strategy and mitigation proposals. There did not appear to be any clear expression of how the LVIA had influenced the layout of the built form other than reference to primary mitigation around the retention of trees and hedges and creation of SuDS features. How the LVIA has influenced the design and layout of the built form in the proposed development in an iterative and positive fashion is not explained.

Given all the above I consider the LVIA to be fair and reasonable except for some of the reporting and abbreviation of findings as reported in the Conclusions.

7. Design and Management Observations

The following summary of potential design and management observations are given as a way of improving the landscape, visual and maintainability aspect of the proposals. Their inclusion should be sought if you are minded recommending consent for the proposals. Their provision by the Applicant should not be seen as a route for automatic acceptance of the scheme but rather as way of bettering the landscape and visual effects it brings about;

1. That a Landscape Architect or Urban Designer leads on the appearance of the SuDS basins to the northern side of the proposals with input from appropriate Drainage Engineers to ensure their aesthetic appeal and that of the whole frontage as well as drainage functions;
2. Keep footpaths to just a single side of the road to maximise the green space to the south side of Manifold Drive with appropriate crossings to reach the existing path to the north side of the lane;
3. A low light level scheme is recommended to reduce the sense of expansion up the hill in the hours of darkness;
4. That a mix of roof profiles, colours and chimneys in the skyline is recommended to add interest in the view up the hill and to break up the potential for a standard approach which will make the development more intrusive;
5. The outline proposals do not show a NEAP or a LEAP and there may be opportunity to include one;
6. There are no ancillary buildings shown such as pumping or sub-stations, if required they should be positioned discretely to limit any intrusive visual effects for the new residents and people looking from public vantage points;
7. There does not appear to be any retained hedgerows in private ownership which is a positive approach to their ongoing management and this should be retained as the scheme is progressed through any detailed design stages;
8. The maximisation of the sizes of front gardens to ensure an ability to plant trees and other larger shrubs in them to green the appearance of the development;
9. Forming planted, visual ‘end-stops’ to Eden Grove, Avon Grove and both ends of Derwent Drive is recommended to limit the sense of visual change for road users on these streets.
10. Increasing the depth and amount of planting to the southern boundary is recommended even if this includes the incorporation of further land from the neighbouring field as the current treatment appears thin and will have buildings very close to the new urban edge increasing their notability from the south such as from Footpath Cheadle 7.
11. The indicative site plan indicates hedged boundaries internally to define plots and this should be retained through later detail design phases as a way of contributing to greening the proposed development.
12. There are no street trees in the highway indicated by the proposals but there are some indicated in private garden spaces and if this approach is accepted then there should be sufficient protection of the trees e.g. TPO’s or specific reference to their replacement in a LMMP to ensure the long term presence of substantially sized trees within the development. This may also required modifications to standard building foundations to accommodate trees of scale.

13. Adequate tree and hedge protection must be provided during the construction process and sufficient space for the stock to grow and not lead to perceived nuisance to nearby property owners.
14. In addition, the submission of a long-term Landscape Maintenance and Management Plan (LMMP) for the duration of the development's operation will be required to cover the initial establishment and ongoing upkeep of the various landscape features and ecological habitats outside of the private residential garden spaces.

8. Suggested planning conditions

As explained above there is moderate landscape and visual harm to be put in the planning balance at the Site. Should you be minded to recommend planning consent and notwithstanding the already submitted outline landscape proposals the following Planning Conditions are suggested;

A. Confirmation of all earthworks through the provision of an earth modelling plans and sections are provided to and agreed with the Local Planning Authority along with a Materials Management Plan produced by a suitably qualified Geotechnical Engineer including the source of material to ensure that the is structurally stable and can receive tree and scrub planting. Reason – *To ensure stability of earthworks and assimilation of the feature into the local landscape.*

B. That a detailed hard and soft landscape mitigation scheme, including plant and material schedules are submitted for consideration and agreement in writing with the Planning Authority in advance of construction. *Reason – to ensure that the proposals maintain the urban – rural edge character and respect the neighbouring landscape and residential properties.*

C. The soft landscape proposals should be implemented in the first growing season after the project has commenced and replacement of dead, diseased or dying stock should be undertaken in accordance with a Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan for a minimum period of 5 years. *Reason – to ensure the quality of the landscape mitigation measures and appropriate maintenance until they become effective.*

D. That no tree felling or crown reduction works or hedge clearance is undertaken on , or excavation within root protection areas, without the express written agreement of Staffordshire Moorlands Borough Council's Arboricultural Officer and after consideration of tree sensitive construction processes – *Reason to protect the mature tree and hedge stock that contributes to the local landscape.*

E. That a Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan (LMMP) is prepared for implementation by the site owners / tenants / operators in perpetuity and that an arrangement for continuation of the LMMP by any future owners is entered into – *Reason – to reflect the importance of the soft landscape mitigation proposals for the local landscape character.*

F. Low light level scheme – *Reason – to reduce the intrusive nature of lighting in the rural edge landscape in the hours of darkness.*

I recognise that the suggested conditions could be combined with others that you may be considering and will require careful wording to be enforceable but wished to explain the reasoning behind them. I trust you find these comments useful as you consider the determination of this application. Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Stuart Ryder

Ryder Landscape Consultants – on behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands Borough Council

12/10/25