



Landscape & Visual Appraisal

Breach Road, Brown Edge

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N251349_R01**

Appendices



Produced by: Influence Landscape Planning and Design Ltd
landscape architects, urban designers, environmental planners

Midlands Office

The Wheelwrights, Huddlestons Wharf

Newark, NG24 4UL

+44 (0) 1636 702152

info@influence.co.uk

www.influence.co.uk

Contributors:	Sara Boland CMLI Maxine Millard CMLI Sorcha McCay
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Checked by:	Leonie Brown CMLI

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Table of Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
	Outline	1
	Assumptions and Limitations.....	1
2	Planning Context.....	2
	Introduction	2
	International Legislation	2
	National Legislation	2
	National Planning Policy Framework.....	3
	National Design Guide	4
	National Model Design Code	4
	Local Planning Policy.....	5
	Designations and Registered Sites.....	8
3	Methodology	9
	Guidance	9
	Study Area.....	9
4	Landscape Baseline	10
	Landscape Baseline.....	10
	Landscape Character Assessment	10
	Landscape Observations of the Application Site and Study Area.....	11
	Landscape Sensitivity for Landscape Receptors.....	12
5	Visual Baseline	14
	Visual Baseline	14
	Viewpoints	14
6	Proposal	17
	Constraints and Opportunities	17
	Landscape Mitigation/Strategy	18
7	Landscape and Visual Appraisal	19
8	Summary of effects.....	22
	Summary of effects on landscape character	22
	Summary of effects on visual amenity	22

9 Summary and Conclusions23

 Landscape Appraisal Conclusion..... 23

 Visual Appraisal Conclusion 23

 Overall Conclusion 24

10 References.....25

Appendices

Appendix A	LVA Methodology
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Figures

INF_ N251349(08)001	Context and Designations
INF_N251349 (08)002	Landscape Character
INF_N251349 (08)003	ZTV and Viewpoint Locations
INF_N251349 (08)004	Local Topography and Features
INF_N251349 (08)004-009	Representative Viewpoints
INF_ N251349 (03)001	Constraints and Opportunities

1 Introduction

Outline

- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVA) has been prepared by Influence Landscape Planning and Design Ltd (Influence), a chartered Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning practice.
- 1.2 Influence has been appointed by Heaton Planning on behalf of Debbie Evans to carry out this LVA to accompany a planning application for residential development at land to the north of Breach Road, Brown Edge.
- 1.3 Pre application advice has been received from Staffordshire Moorlands District Council¹ and the response sets out that:
 - *'The development would utilise grey belt and would not fundamental undermine the purposes (taken together of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan.*
 - *As stated above, the site is not previously developed land. However, it is also not an "area" or "asset" which provides a strong reason for refusing development other than it being in the Green Belt.*
 - *I therefore consider the site could be regarded as a "Grey Belt" site.*
 - *With regard to landscape impact, inevitably, the construction of 59 houses on an open greenfield site, visible from roads and public footpaths will have a significant visual impact and a degree of landscape harm. However, the Landscape Character Assessment undertaken to support the development of the now adopted local plan, did not include the site within the area identified as providing an 'important landscape setting to (the) settlement'. The proposal would be assessed against Policy DC3 of the Local Plan ('Landscape and Settlement Setting').'*
- 1.4 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)². It provides a narrative appraisal of the proposed development within the identified application site and surrounding study area and any potential landscape and visual impacts. This report is not a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and it does not include a Grey Belt Assessment. An assessment of Grey Belt is undertaken under a separate report, which will also accompany the planning application of land to the north of Breach Road, Brown Edge³.

Assumptions and Limitations

- 1.5 No technical difficulties or issues were encountered undertaking this appraisal and its related site visit. It is assumed that proposed residential build is no taller than 9m in height.

¹ PAD/2025/0021: Pre-app submission, SMDC, SJ, 04.09.25

² Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013

³ N251239_R02_Grey Belt Report, Breach Road, Brown Edge, Influence, March 2026

2 Planning Context

Introduction

- 2.1 Aspects of planning guidance and policy, which are of particular relevance to the LVA, are examined below. Relevant statutory, non-statutory and planning designations within the LVA study area are shown on figure INF_N251349(08)001 Context and Designations.

International Legislation

- 2.2 The European Landscape Convention (ELC)⁴, 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”*⁵.

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 Regulations⁶ 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 function⁷.
- 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 is 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

⁴ Council of Europe, 2004

⁵ Council of Europe, 2004

⁶ The Environment Act 1995 (Part 5) Hedgerow Regulations 1997 (SI 1997 No, 1160)

⁷ 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)⁸ 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 protect and enhance 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 LVA are summarised as:
- Section 12 Achieving well-designed places⁹, *‘which addresses the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and place. 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 and historic character, respond to the surrounding built environment and landscape setting and establish or maintain a sense of place. The importance of trees in urban environments is also addressed;’*
 - Section 13 Protecting Green Belt Land¹⁰, *‘sets out the commitment to protecting Green Belt land by maintaining its openness and preventing urban sprawl. It outlines that development in the Green Belt is generally inappropriate unless justified by very special circumstances, such as specific types of affordable housing or infrastructure projects. The section introduces the concept of “grey belt” land, areas within the Green Belt that are previously developed or contribute less to its core purposes, which may allow for more flexible development. Local authorities are urged to prioritise brownfield and underused urban land before considering changes to Green Belt boundaries, which should only occur through the plan-making process and in exceptional circumstances.’*
 - Section 15 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment¹¹, *‘which states (inter alia) that the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside should be recognised. Policies should provide net gains for biodiversity. Valued landscapes such as National Parks and AONB should be conserved and enhanced, with the scale of development limited in this area;’* and
 - Section 16 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment¹² *‘sets out the approach to heritage assets identifying that they are irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations’.*

⁸ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, National Planning Policy Framework, February 2025

⁹ Section 12, paras 131-136 NPPF, 2025

¹⁰ Section 13, paras 142-160 NPPF, 2025

¹¹ Section 15, paras 187-195 NPPF, 2025

¹² Section 16, paras 202-212 NPPF, 2025

National Design Guide

- 2.13 The National Design Guide (NDG)¹³ has been published to further expand the design policies set out in the NPPF providing a framework to assess proposals against in terms of achieving well designed places.
- 2.14 One of the key components identified in the NDG that needs to be considered to ensure good design is landscape. When addressing the identity of a place, characteristic I1 identifies the importance of landscape setting and backdrop in order to respond effectively to local identity.
- 2.15 A key part of the NDG assessment relates to context and how well-designed places need to be integrated into their surroundings, so they relate well to them along with being influenced by and influencing their context positively¹⁴. Characteristic C1 emphasises the need to respond appropriately to landscape character in order to provide positive new developments.

National Model Design Code

- 2.16 This design code expands upon the National Design Code. Section 3b relates to all development within the area covered by a design code made through the local plan. All development should enhance nature as well as the built environment and could do this by:
- Contributing to a green infrastructure network;
 - Schemes must address sustainable drainage systems; and
 - The scheme must follow national policy and seek to achieve a 10% biodiversity net gain.
- 2.17 In terms of built form and landscape and visual matters, the scheme should be designed to enhance local character.

NPPG Green Belt¹⁵

- 2.18 This guidance sets out:
- *'the considerations involved in assessing the contribution Green Belt land makes to Green Belt purposes, where relevant to identifying grey belt land*
 - *the considerations involved in determining whether release or development of Green Belt land would fundamentally undermine the remaining Green Belt in the plan area;*
 - *guidance for considering proposals on potential grey belt land*
 - *guidance on identifying sustainable locations when considering the release or development of Green Belt land*
 - *updated guidance on how major housing development on land which is released from the Green Belt through plan making, or on sites in the Green Belt, should contribute to accessible green space*
 - *updated guidance on how to consider the potential impact of development on the openness of the Green Belt'.*

¹³ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, National Design Guide, January 2021

¹⁴ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, National Design Guide, January 2021, p10

¹⁵ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Green Belt, Feb 2025

Local Planning Policy

- 2.19 The application site is located within the administrative jurisdiction of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.
- 2.20 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.

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Adopted Local Plan 2020

Policy SS 10: Other Rural Areas Strategy

- 2.21 *'The other rural areas comprise the countryside and the green belt outside of the development boundaries of the towns and larger villages and the open countryside surrounding the smaller villages*
- 2.22 *These areas will provide only for development which has an essential need to be located in the countryside, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside.¹⁶*

Policy DC 3: Landscape and Settlement Setting

- 2.23 *'The Council will protect and, where possible, enhance local landscape and the setting of settlements in the Staffordshire Moorlands by:*
- *Resisting development which would lead to prominent intrusion into the countryside or have a significant adverse impact on the character or the setting of a settlement or important views into and out of the settlement as identified in the Landscape and Settlement Character evidence;*
 - *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 evidence;*
 - *Supporting developments which conserve or enhance the biodiversity qualities of any natural or man-made features within the landscape, such as trees, woodlands, hedgerows, walls, watercourses or ponds; and*
 - *Supporting opportunities to positively manage the landscape and use sustainable building techniques and materials which are sympathetic to the landscape.'*

Policy C 2: Sport, Recreation and Open Space

- 2.24 *'Residential developments of 10 dwellings (Or 0.5ha) will be expected to make provision, or a contribution towards provision of open space, sports and recreation facilities which are necessary and reasonably related in form and scale in accordance with the recommendations set out in the following studies:*
- *'Open Space Study;*
 - *Paying Pitch Strategy; and*
 - *Indoor Sports Facility Assessment (2017) and successor documents.'*

¹⁶ Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Adopted Local Plan 2020

Policy NE 1: Biodiversity and Geological Resources

- 2.25 *'The biodiversity and geological resources of the District and neighbouring areas will be conserved and enhanced by positive management and strict control of development (and having regard to relevant ecological evidence) by:*
- *By ensuring all development schemes have regard to the surveys and actions recommended by the Council's Extended Phase 1 Habitat Surveys and Local Wildlife Assessment and include measures for protection and enhancement of site biodiversity and protection of any geodiversity as appropriate.*
 - *Expecting all development where possible seeks to deliver a net gain in biodiversity proportionate to the size and scale of the development. In circumstances where adverse impacts are demonstrated to be unavoidable, developers will be required to ensure that impacts are appropriately mitigated, with suitable compensation measures towards loss of habitat used only as a last resort where there is no alternative. Where any mitigation and compensation measures are required, they should be appropriately scheduled and managed according to the nature, size and scale of the development so as to minimise impacts that may disturb protected or important habitats and species.'*

Policy NE 2: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

- 2.26 *'The Council will protect existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows, in particular, ancient woodland, veteran trees and ancient or species-rich hedgerows from loss or deterioration. This will be achieved by:*
- *Requiring that existing woodlands, healthy trees and hedgerows are retained and integrated within a proposed development unless the need for, and benefits of, the development clearly outweigh their loss;*
 - *Requiring new developments to provide tree cover that secures a good level of sustainability through tree retention, planting and soft landscaping, including where possible the on-site replacement of any trees that are removed with sufficient tree planting to replace or increase the canopy cover on-site as appropriate. Landscaping schemes will also be required to mitigate against negative landscape impact and complement the design of new development and make provision for future maintenance. Where it is not possible to secure this new or replacement tree planting within the site, the Council will work with applicants to ascertain if a suitable site(s) can be found off-site for replacement planting in the locality; and*
 - *Resisting development that would directly or indirectly damage existing ancient woodland, veteran trees and ancient or species-rich hedgerows.'*

Design Guide SPD¹⁷

- 2.27 This guidance provides information on good design, and with respect to buildings on the edge of settlements. It states within the 'setting' section regarding buildings that:
- *'buildings should sit comfortably in the landscape. This is best achieved by emulating the horizontal, ground hugging form of traditional buildings with their strong eaves and ridge lines and simple, low silhouettes parallel with the contours.'*

¹⁷ Staffordshire Moorlands D C, adopted 2018.

- *'The palette of roof materials is often limited.'*
 - *'New development must respect the "grain" of the settlement.'*
 - *'Design solutions should respond to the local tradition but without slavishly copying it.'*
- 2.28 With regards to landscaping the report states that preference to native species should be given and new tree and shrub planting:
- *'can provide screening for privacy, enclosure or shelter or just to "fix" the buildings into the landscape in a traditional way.'*
 - *New development should conserve or create new opportunities for wildlife.'*
 - *Wherever possible, opportunities for enhancement must be considered.'*

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Green Belt Review Study 2015

- 2.29 This report has been produced as part of the local plan evidence base for Staffordshire Moorlands District Council to review the Green Belt across the District. The study is split into two parts.
- 2.30 Part 1 is strategic in nature and reviews the contribution of land to Green Belt purposes as set out in the NPPF.
- 2.31 Part 2 considers specific sites proposed for development and land with potential for release and makes recommendations on land which could be considered for release.
- 2.32 The land within the Staffordshire Moorlands District is split into parcels. The site sits within parcel N23 Land to the north of Endon, east of Brown Edge. The Information of particular relevance to the site is set out below within a table taken from the study:

Green Belt Purpose	Check unrestricted sprawl	Prevent towns merging	Safeguarding from encroachment	Setting of towns	Assist regeneration	Overall	Commentary on overall strategic function
N23 Land to the north of Endon, east of Brown Edge	Contribution	Limited Contribution	Contribution	Limited Contribution	Contribution	Contribution	One of a group of five parcels (N6, N13, N14, N23 & N24) which form a significant proportion of the northern part of the Green Belt. Despite being relatively remote rural areas, their open, sparsely settled character makes them all particularly vulnerable to the effects of urbanisation.

- 2.33 It is also important to point out that part of the site (the eastern portion) is under BE032, a *'potential Green Belt Development Site'* and having the *'potential of being release without damaging Green Belt purposes'*. The study states *'BE032 – land to the north of Leek Road. Could be phased for development beyond the Plan period.'*

Designations and Registered Sites

- 2.34 The application site is not located within any national or local nature, heritage or landscape designation.
- 2.35 The whole site sits within the Stoke on Trent Green Belt which lies to the east of Stoke on Trent within Staffordshire Moorlands District. A Special Landscape Area lies to the northern side of High Lane and Breach Road, located on the western side of Brown Edge village.
- 2.36 There are a number of scattered Listed Buildings across the study area, the nearest lying approximately 250m to the east of the site along Breach Road. Heritage considerations are not discussed further in this report.
- 2.37 A nature conservation site called Tinster Wood lies approximately 250m to the south of the site and is a designated Site of Biological Interest and Ancient Woodland.
- 2.38 There are a number of PRoW within the vicinity with Staffordshire Moorlands Walks CP/10, a long distance route, lying to the west of the site as it travels in a north south direction along the ridgeline through the village of Brown Edge, and then to the south of the site.

3 Methodology

Guidance

- 3.1 The format of this LVA is based on the principles set out in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition¹⁸, the Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland¹⁹ and An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment²⁰. A detailed methodology is provided in Appendix A.
- 3.2 *Viewpoint photographs have been presented in accordance with the Landscape Institute's Advice Note TGN Visual Representation 06/19*²¹.

Study Area

- 3.3 This theoretical visibility is based on a LiDAR digital surface model (DSM) at 2m resolution which was collected in 2025. It takes into account the intervening vegetation and built form during the winter months (between November and March).
- 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 considerably restricted by the surrounding landform combined with intervening vegetation and built form. Based on this information the study area of the LVA has been defined as a maximum of 1 km from the application site.
- 3.5 Only landscape and visual receptors within the LVA 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.

¹⁸ Landscape Institute, 2019

¹⁹ Former Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002

²⁰ Natural England, 2014

²¹ Landscape Institute, 2019

4 Landscape Baseline

Landscape Baseline

- 4.1 The landscape character within the LVA study area is described and assessed below, and relevant information concerning landscape character is shown in figure INF_N251349(08)002_ Landscape Character Plan which illustrates the existing relevant landscape character areas within the study area.

Landscape Character Assessment

Local Landscape Character

Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment of Staffordshire Moorlands (LSCA)²²

- 4.2 The whole of the site lies within Ancient Slope and Valley Farmlands LCT. The key characteristics of this LCT, which are of relevance to the site and study area are summarised below:
- *'Strongly undulating or sloping landscape cut by small scale steep sided stream valleys*
 - *Small scale mainly ancient irregular fields bounded by trees and hedgerows*
 - *Extensive views from higher ground*
 - *Intimate wooded valleys*
 - *Stone buildings and drystone walls towards uplands*
 - *Isolated properties*
 - *Narrow winding lanes'*
- 4.3 In the LSCA, it states that *'Planning for Landscape Change Supplementary Planning Guidance to Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Structure Plan, identifies this landscape character areas as an area requiring landscape maintenance although that part of the character type around Cheadle requires landscape enhancement. It is not identified as an area that is particularly sensitive to change.*
- 4.4 The settlement character of Brown Edge is also appraised in this document. There are no key views towards the site or areas identified as Visual Open Space. Brown Edge village and its setting is described as having the following relevant characteristics:
- *'Residential development becomes increasingly dense towards the SE and far S of the settlement, with a number of cul-de-sacs located off Sytch Road, Leek Road and High Lane.*
 - *Brown Edge lies along a ridge that extends south from Biddulph Moor.*

²² LSCA, 2008

- *The landscape setting relates to areas of a strong established landscape structure, generally characterised by irregular fields bounded by hedgerows, with hedgerow trees and vegetated streamlines.'*

4.5 There are no significant landscape features identified at the site in the LSCA.

Landscape Observations of the Application Site and Study Area

- 4.6 Brown Edge is a village and civil parish in the Staffordshire Moorlands district of Staffordshire, England. The site is located upon a south eastern edge of Brown Edge settlement boundary, within Green Belt.
- 4.7 The site area is at approximately 3 Ha and comprises of a number of small agricultural fields—mainly in pasture land use, with a narrow track that runs to a compound lying within an upper field to the north, and small timber sheds lying south of the tree line at the upper eastern part of the site. The site falls to the south from higher land at the northern boundary, to approximately 200m AoD where the site meets Breach Road.
- 4.8 The external boundaries of the site are generally mature hedgerow and trees, apart from an open boundary along the western boundary, next to the settlement edge and an open northern boundary where the site is part of a larger field. The eastern boundary is mature hedgerow and trees that screens views to the site from the east. The southern boundary of the site is mature hedgerow and a few scattered trees. This structural boundary vegetation is well formed and there is some visual separation from the site for receptors along this edge. A line of trees lies running in an east to west direction in the northern part of the site are protected under Tree Preservation Order (TPO) No. 4²³. A recent arboriculture survey²⁴ has been undertaken and it notes that most of the Beech trees are of poor condition. At the eastern end of this line of trees, the Oak is a prominent tree. The arboriculture survey notes the majority of the Beech trees are in poor condition. Other vegetated boundaries are stated to be of higher arboricultural quality and on the whole all trees may be retained where '*they pose little constraint on development*'.
- 4.9 Some of the Beech trees have bat roosting potential, (as noted in the ecological survey²⁵).
- 4.10 Internal field boundaries are made up of post and wire fencing and there is stock proof fencing to the access track. There are no other features at the site, apart from telegraph wires that cross the centre of the site in an east west direction, and small timber sheds in the northern part of the site.



Figure 1: Viewpoint 02, recorded at access along Breach Road looking north west into the site

²³ Order made in 1976

²⁴ Brown Edge, ref: TCP/5402/Y/100, ACS Consulting, Oct 2025

²⁵ Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Report at Brown Edge Staffordshire, Heaton, Sept 2025

- 4.1 Breach Road lies along the southern boundary of the site and there are glimpses through to the site at this access point. There are few residential properties lying along this southern edge with a large nursery home, accessed via Breach Road offset from the settlement edge and in an elevated position. Breach Road leads into the southern end of Brown Edge village, housing here is modern and moderately grained in general with some older properties lying along Breach Road.
- 4.2 Farmland surrounds the site away from the settlement edge with irregular shaped small fields with hedgerow and tree'd boundaries. Hedgerow along Breach Road are generally maintained at a low height in contrast to that of the site. A small watercourse runs from the north eastern corner of the site in a northerly direction. There are limited views outwards at the site due to vegetation and built form and the sloped land, but there are undeveloped and scenic views to the south directed towards the ridge line belonging to the long distance route of Staffordshire Moorland Walks PRoW CP/10.
- 4.3 The Staffordshire Moorland Walks long distance route can be accessed near to the site along Breach Road via a PRoW Footpath that edges the village. There are other PRoW footpaths that surround the site in other directions, but due to topography and intervening vegetation there is limited intervisibility to the site.

Landscape Sensitivity for Landscape Receptors

Sensitivity of the Site

- 4.4 Key sensitivities of the site include the vegetated field boundaries, within smaller irregular shaped fields as well as its sloping landform. They are described as key characteristics within the LSCA. There are no rare or distinctive features at the site. There are no key views towards the site, and the site can be described as fairly contained by a combination of topography, strong boundaries and proximity to the edge of settlement.
- 4.5 Landscape at the site is not subject to any formal landscape designation but it does contribute to the typical valley landscape outside of settlement at this location and fits well with the ley characteristics outlined in the LSCA, it is in private use with no public access and recreational amenity. It is assessed in this report as having low to medium value.
- 4.6 Susceptibility to residential development is assessed in this report as medium due to some intactness of the elements at the site with a few detracting elements.
- 4.7 Overall, the sensitivity of the site, as a combination of value and susceptibility, is assessed in this report as having a **medium** sensitivity to residential development.

Sensitivity of the Ancient Slope and Valley Farmlands LCT

- 4.8 As mentioned, the landscape of the site contributes well to the key characteristics of the LCT. The extents of this LCT are large, covering a large proportion of Staffordshire Moorlands, containing numerous PRoW with the addition of key views from elevated positions particularly out to the west of Brown Edge. Western and southern areas are described in the LSCA as being an important landscape setting to Brown Edge, in contrast to land immediately east of the southern part of Brown Edge village. In general, this LCT is described in the LSCA as an

area '*not particularly sensitive to change*' and is assessed in this report as having a **medium** sensitivity to residential development.

5 Visual Baseline

Visual Baseline

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 Figure INF_N251349(08)003 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

- 5.3 The ZTV analysis and subsequent site visits identified several areas within the LVA study area which would have visibility of the proposed development.
- 5.4 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. Views have not been included when not available from a particular location or to a particular receptor.
- 5.5 The key sensitive receptors identified for this LVA include:
- PRow receptors (VPs 03, 04, 05 & 08)
 - Residential receptors (VP 07)
 - Road users (VPs 01 & 06)

PRoW Receptors

- 5.6 Viewpoints 03 and 04 are recorded along PRow footpath CP12 looking north towards the site. Viewpoint 03 is recorded at the start of the PRow which leads out of the village and connects to the long distance PRow Footpath CP10. An open view of the site is available at the start of PRow Footpath CP12, with much of the ground plain screened by intervening vegetation at the site boundary. There are available views of the tree line at the northern part of the site, and the site is fairly contained by built form, local topography and lines of vegetation in this view looking north. As there are gaps in the northern tree line, there are middle distance glimpsed views of pasture land of the site, but any longer distance views are not available. It is an undeveloped and unified view, typical of countryside at the edge of settlement, with only telegraph wires as a single urban detractor in this view.
- 5.7 Travelling towards the long distance path along this PRow route, views of the site are closed down with Viewpoint 04 demonstrating a glimpsed partial view of the site at a gap between residential built form.
- 5.8 Users of this PRow route are upon a local route, outside of any landscape designation and with a general interest in their surroundings, and users are assigned a **medium** sensitivity to changes in available views.

- 5.9 Upon reaching long distance PRoW Footpath CP10, views are only available at a very short stretch of this path, at the highest point of the ridge, with no views of the site available elsewhere on this route or from other PRoW south of the site, due to local topography and intervening vegetation. The site is at the edge of the view at Viewpoint 05, it is a filtered view of the site, a view encompassing valley sides in pasture land use in a moderately vegetated landscape, with mature hedgerow and tree'd field boundaries, boundaries that crisscross the landscape. It is a fairly unified view of farmland offering middle distance views across an undulating landscape at a break in vegetation along this part of the route.
- 5.10 Users of this PRoW route are upon a long distance route, outside of any landscape designation and with a general interest in their surroundings, and they are assigned a **medium to high** sensitivity to changes in available views.
- 5.11 PRoW footpath CP70 lies north of the site and links Brown Edge to Endon settlements traveling through farmland on grassed paths. Residential built form at the edge of settlement is apparent in Viewpoint 08, and it is a view of the valley landscape, with the site screened due to intervening vegetation and being located on low lying land. For the majority of this route the site is difficult to discern, due to these reasons. This is a local route, outside of any landscape designation, with users having a general interest in their surroundings. Users of this footpath are assigned a **medium** sensitivity to changes in available views.

Residential Receptors

- 5.12 Viewpoint 07 is recorded from the edge of greenspace at the centre of the housing estate directly adjacent to the west of the site. This greenspace is accessed off Chestnut Road and represents edge of settlement views at this southern end of Brown Edge village. There is a very partial view of pasture land at the site glimpsed between residential built form. Mature vegetation at the boundaries of the site foreshortens any longer distance views in this view looking to the east. It is experienced as a typical suburban view at the edge of settlement. The site is not experienced as part of a wider countryside view.



Figure 2: Viewpoint 07, recorded at greenspace at Chestnut Rd looking east towards the site

- 5.13 The sensitivity of this group of residential receptors is assessed as **medium to high** due to the value of this view being medium in general and the susceptibility of this group of residential receptors being medium to high. Only the properties directly facing the site will experience close proximity open views of the site, with the majority having glimpsed, very partial views when looking to the east, and therefore the focus of interest will not be towards the site in the main for this group of residential receptors.

Road Users

- 5.14 Viewpoint 06 is recorded along Breach Road upon the approach to the site from the east. The site is screened by mature hedgerow and trees that lie along its eastern edge. Views of elevated built form within the interior of Brown Edge are available in this view looking west towards the site. In general Brown Edge village is nestled in the landscape in this view with only glimpses of built form above a mainly treed horizon line.
- 5.15 Viewpoint 01 is recorded at current access along Breach Road, where there is a gap in the mature hedgerow boundary that lies at the southern boundary of the site at the edge of the village and represents a view for a single property opposite to the site. Views to the north are generally foreshortened by mature hedge at ground level with glimpses of the more elevated northern edge of the site with its tree line available.
- 5.16 Road users are generally assigned a **low** sensitivity to changes in the local landscape due to their preoccupation with road conditions and in addition, the routes near to the site are not highlighted scenic routes.

6 Proposal

6.1 The Proposals are for a residential development consisting of up to 55 new homes with access roads and associated landscaping, on land to the north of Breach Road. The proposed Block Plan²⁶ includes:

- Potential new vehicular access is located just west of current site access, on the southern boundary of the site.
- A 'notional balancing pond' at the southern boundary, near to the entrance of the site.
- A buffer of Open Space runs west of the balancing pond. This area encompasses a Local Area for Play (LAP).
- A new pumping station is located near to the entrance to the site.
- The retention of trees and hedgerow across the site, except for new access into the site and access to the uppermost field.
- Creation of mixed scrub along a part of the western boundary and new native street trees across the site.
- Ecological enhancements include the creation of grassland habitat (including at the northern part of the site).

Constraints and Opportunities

- 6.2 The main constraint is the Green Belt planning designation of the site and to the wider area surrounding Brown Edge Village. A separate Grey Belt report discusses this issue²⁷.
- 6.3 TPO beech trees at the northern part of the site are in poor condition, as compared to the higher condition of remaining vegetated field boundaries. The arboriculture report states that where field boundary vegetation poses no constraint to development then they can be retained. Vegetated boundaries are valuable for wildlife and provide screening as well as containment to the site providing a discrete parcel of land serving to extend the settlement edge at this part of Brown edge. This eastern location adjacent to Brown Edge settlement is not characterised as contributing to the landscape setting of Brown Edge village.
- 6.4 The land slopes slightly to the south and this gives the opportunity for sustainable drainage at the lowest part of the site.
- 6.5 The site is currently private and there is the potential for the creation of Public Open Space to increase recreational amenity for local residents as a whole.
- 6.6 With regards to protected species there are few constraints according to the Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Report, with the Proposed Development deemed as '*most works possible*' and recommending that development retains lines of trees, grassland edges, tall forbes and hedgerows.

²⁶ Block Plan as Proposed, 2543_P13, Matthew Monague Architects, 13.04.26

²⁷ N251239_R02_Grey Belt Report, Breach Road, Brown Edge, Influence, April 2026

Landscape Mitigation/Strategy

6.7 Enhancement recommendations according to the Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Report (ECOP)²⁸ consist of:

- *'Opportunity for the creation of higher distinctiveness grassland, through increasing species per m² and reducing management activities.*
- *Opportunity for the creation of more ecologically valuable habitats.*
- *Brash and logs from works could be used away from any future potential work areas to create refuge and hibernacula for invertebrates.*
- *Insect hotels could be installed and incorporation of nectar- and pollen-rich flora species, as well as night-scented varieties in any seeding or planting.*
- *Boundary fences will be designed with hedgehog highways at the bottom.*
- *All gully pot drains or similar will have escape ladders similar to those BHS (The BHS Amphibian Gully Pot Ladder |British Herpetological Society).*
- *Brash and logs from works could be used away from any future potential work areas to create refuge and hibernacula for small mammals*
- *Enhancing the ditch network through defined channels and reducing poaching.*
- *Bat boxes and/or bird boxes should be installed at a distance to any known future works in the area."*

6.8 A landscape strategy could also include:

- Reinstatement of a healthy mature vegetated boundary at the northern part of the site as well as increased plant diversity across the whole of the site.
- The creation of mixed scrub planting along part of the western boundary.
- Enhanced neutral grassland to the attenuation pond.
- Other modified grassland at northern and southern parts of the site.

²⁸ Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Report at Brown Edge Staffordshire, Heatons, Sept 2025

7 Landscape and Visual Appraisal

Potential Impact upon the Landscape Receptors

The Application Site

- 7.1 In summary, the Proposed Development means the loss of pasture land, replaced with built form and associated infrastructure. There will be additional areas of Green Infrastructure, in the form of SuDs, tree planting and other plantings supplementing the structural framework of the site.
- 7.2 There will be a large change to the character of the site as a result of any new development as the land use will alter from open farmland with no rare or distinguishing features to filtered residential built form within the retained and enhanced framework. There would be a loss of openness at the site. The loss of openness at the site affects intervisibility to the south from within the site only, particularly to the elevated ridge that PRoW Footpath CP10 runs along.
- 7.3 The proposals present the opportunity to enhance boundaries with new planting, including shrubs and improved areas for biodiversity. Overall, there will be an inevitable adverse nature of effect as the landscape of the site will be permanently changed to that of built form and Public Open Space.
- 7.4 The proposed development will extend the settlement to the east, within the existing strong eastern vegetated boundary at the site and demarking a step change to countryside which the site does share characteristics with.
- 7.5 The Proposals retain existing landscape features such as healthy established hedgerow boundaries and trees, apart from for a section of hedgerow at the south of the site where there are new vehicular access arrangements and removal of a tree for access at the upper part of the site. The ECOP assesses the magnitude of impact as discussed above in paragraph 6.6.
- 7.6 Over time, retained and new planting along the boundaries of the site will help to integrate it into its residential surroundings to the east, and become a new settlement edge at this part of Brown Edge.
- 7.7 It is predicted that there will be an overall **high** adverse magnitude of effect at the Application Site due to the proposals and though small in scale, the change is permanent from pasture land to filtered built form and Public Open Space.

Local Landscape Character

- 7.8 The Proposals would extend the settlement edge at this part of Brown Edge, Staffordshire. The level of enclosure of the site is retained with replacement of structural tree line to the north, serving as a new boundary to settlement. The surrounding Ancient Slope and Valley Farmlands LCT is unaffected.
- 7.9 Close range views from the east would be affected by the Proposals, in particular in residential views from the adjacent settlement edge. From other directions, the site is enclosed by landscape features and the change from pasture to heavily filtered built form is small in

scale and less discernible. An appreciation of the immediate open landscape is retained in middle distance views from other directions. There are no long distance views of the site from the wider landscape available due to topography and intervening vegetation.

- 7.10 Due to the proposals, it is predicted that there will be an overall **low** adverse magnitude of effect on the surrounding Ancient Slope and Valley Farmlands LCT, due to the small scale, permanent change from pasture land to filtered built form and Public Open Space.
- 7.11 A separate Grey Belt Assessment²⁹ has been carried out by Influence. The Grey Belt Assessment reviews the site's Grey Belt position with regards to the Green Belt at this location and includes analysis of potential impact upon the surrounding Green Belt. The conclusion reached is that, *'The development of the site does not compromise the integrity of the wider Green Belt parcel: there is no opportunity for unrestricted sprawl due to the site boundaries, and the development will be experienced visually as part of the existing settlement edge, having no impact on the clearly legible gap between Stoke on Trent and Leek, or even Baddeley Edge and Leek'*³⁰.

Potential Impact upon the Visual Receptors

PRoW Receptors

- 7.12 Users of PRoW footpath CP12 will experience an extension of residential built form in the foreground of short range views looking north towards the site. The limited sense of openness at this edge of settlement is lost, although built form would be filtered largely by mature vegetation at the southern boundary of the site. Travelling south along this path there would be glimpses of proposed residential built form between gaps in houses south of Breach Road, and although not introducing a new element into these views, views are greater urbanised as a whole.
- 7.13 Users of this PRoW Footpath would receive **medium** adverse magnitude of effect, due to some foreshortening of views due to the built form alongside retained vegetative screening of the Proposals. It is a moderate alteration to views, not unexpected and in keeping with the local visual character as the site is experienced as a continuation of urban built form eastwards along Breach Road.
- 7.14 For PRoW user's footpath CP10, there is very limited opportunities to view the site. At Viewpoint 05 the existing glimpsed and partial middle distance view of the site would change from pasture land to that of residential built form. It is a moderate alteration to views with a portion of the view affected by urban built form, filtered by roadside vegetation and contained within the prominent vegetated field pattern of the valley landscape. The user is aware of proximity to settlement, and the change would not be incongruous. An appreciation of the valley landscape is maintained with longer distance views unaffected and users of this PRoW footpath in general would receive **low** adverse magnitude of effect.
- 7.15 For the majority of the route, as represented by viewpoint 08, PRoW receptors do not have available views of the site due to topography and intervening vegetation. Overall, PRoW users of CP70 would experience a negligible change in views, they may experience filtered

²⁹ Breach Road, Brown Edge, Grey Belt Assessment, N251349_R02, Influence, March 2026

³⁰ Para 5.17, Breach Road, Brown Edge, Grey Belt Assessment, N251349_R02, Influence, March 2026

views of Public Open Space lying north of residential built form. This will be low impact and hard to discern. Longer distance views are unaffected. It is judged that there would be a **low to negligible** adverse magnitude of effect for these recreational receptors.

Residential Receptors

- 7.16 Public views in close proximity to site at Brown Edge settlement edge are represented by Viewpoint 07. The glimpsed and very partial view of the site would be altered to contain fenced back gardens of residential built form instead of pasture land. Glimpsed views would be foreshortened, and the experience would be of a continuation of urban built form. This change is assessed as low due to the small scale of the change and the existing framework of trees surrounding the site being retained.
- 7.17 This change is assessed as a **medium** adverse magnitude of effect for residential receptors overall with a higher magnitude of effect for the small number of residential receptors in properties adjacent, and directly facing, the site at this edge.

Road Users

- 7.18 There is a negligible magnitude of effect for road users at Viewpoint 06, due to screening of the site at its vegetated eastern boundary.
- 7.19 At Viewpoint 01 where there is a gap in boundary vegetation, views of the pastoral field at the site, sloping northwards, are glimpsed. As road users are aware of approaching settlement the change to residential built form, at Brown Edge village would extend to the site, would be of low impact. It is considered that overall, road users would receive a very **low** adverse magnitude of effect due to the Proposals.

8 Summary of Effects

Summary of Effects on Landscape Character

- 8.1 The effects on landscape character are summarised in Table 1

Table 1: Summary of effects on landscape character

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity	Predicted Nature and Magnitude of Impact
The site	Medium	High adverse
LCT	Medium	Low adverse

Summary of Effects on Visual Amenity

- 8.2 The effects on visual amenity are summarised in Table 2

Table 2: Summary of effects on visual amenity

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Predicted Nature and Magnitude of Impact
Views from PRow CP12	Medium	Medium adverse
Views from PRow CP10	Medium to High	Low adverse
Views from PRow CP70	Medium	Low adverse to negligible
Residential Receptors	Medium to High	Medium adverse
Road Users	Low	Low adverse

9 Summary and Conclusions

- 9.1 A Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVA) has been conducted in accordance with good practice guidance contained within the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition (GLVIA3)³¹. It assesses the landscape and visual effects in relation to the proposed residential development at Breach Road, Brown Edge.

Landscape Appraisal Conclusion

- 9.2 The Proposals are for a mixed residential development consisting of up to 55 new homes with access roads and associated landscaping. It is agricultural land and consists of small fields of mainly pasture land use on sloping land.
- 9.3 The sensitive elements of the site consist of its hedgerow and tree'd field boundaries, with a northern line of trees having TPO designation. All field boundary vegetation to be retained, excepting for access as discussed above.
- 9.4 The site is surrounded by residential development at its eastern boundary, with countryside of a mainly agricultural nature in other directions. There are no national or local nature, heritage or landscape designation at the site. The site lies within Green Belt.
- 9.5 The site and immediate landscape outside of settlement lie within Ancient Slope and Valley Farmlands LCT. Overall, landscape sensitivity of the site is judged to be medium due to overall lack of sensitive characteristics of this LCA, albeit with characteristics that align well to Ancient Slope and Valley Farmlands LCT. As expected, impacts are judged to be high adverse due to the change from pastoral land to residential development at the southern part of the site.
- 9.6 The Proposals would be experienced as an extension of the settlement edge at this part of Brown Edge Village, with impacts upon Ancient Slope and Valley Farmlands LCT judged to be low, due to containment of the site and some screening, due to the strong structural framework at the site and the local topography.

Visual Appraisal Conclusion

- 9.7 Visually, for local sensitive receptors, there are only very partial views of the site due to undulating topography and screening vegetation.
- 9.8 There are close range views for a very small number of private residential receptors that face the site at Brown Edge, and very partial views from the one location identified in the public realm.
- 9.9 Recreational receptors on local routes have mainly oblique and at the most glimpsed, partial views of the site. There are more open views of the site at the start of PRoW footpath CP12 when in close proximity to the south of the site. These PRoW users are assessed as having a

³¹ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013

medium adverse magnitude of effect due to the Proposals, with much lower impacts for PRoW users of other local routes.

- 9.10 The structural framework of the site is retained and enhanced. Sensitive features such as lines of trees and hedgerow are proposed to be retained, with minor loss to allow for access. Additional planting includes tree, hedgerow, scrub, grassland and semi wetland habitat at SUDs attenuation. Species biodiversity is increased across the site and new opportunities for play are created within a buffer of created Public Open Space. This area would be accessed easily by surrounding residents.

Overall Conclusion

- 9.11 It is considered in this report that there are **no significant impacts** upon sensitive landscape and visual receptors due to the Proposals, and some ecological benefits are predicted, due to increased plant species diversity at the site, alongside greater opportunities for recreation and play for local people.

10 References

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, National Design Guide, January 2021.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2025, *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, 2019, *Advice Note TGN Visual Representation of Development Proposals 06/19*

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 – LVA Methodology

A Methodology

Guidance

- 1.1 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 Scotland¹ and Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition².
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 Viewpoint photographs have been presented in accordance with the Landscape Institute's (LI) Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals⁵.

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.
- 1.6 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

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

⁵ Landscape Institute, 2019

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, 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 Scotland⁶ makes a distinction between the characterisation process and the judgement-making 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

⁶ Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002

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.
- 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. TPO's 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.

Table A-1 Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

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.

Receptor Sensitivity	Typical Criteria
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.

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 large-scale, 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.

Table A-2 Magnitude of Landscape Effects

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.

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 application 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.

Table A-3 Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

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 (PRoW) 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.

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.

Table A-4 Magnitude of Visual Effects

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. 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 nature of effects contributes to the assessment of magnitude of landscape and visual effects.
- 1.50 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.
- 1.51 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.
- 1.52 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.
- 1.53 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, e.g. regeneration benefits attributable to the scheme).

Significance of Landscape and Visual Effects

- 1.54 Assessment of landscape and visual effects refers to the change that is predicted to take place to the existing (baseline) condition of the landscape and views as a result of the proposed development.
- 1.55 The significance of an effect is broadly determined by assessing the sensitivity to change, of the landscape and visual receptors, against the magnitude of change predicted upon them. The assessment of the effects takes into account mitigation measures implemented as part of the proposed development. Table A-5 is used as a guide only and the assessment of the significance of effect takes into account other modifying factors, based on professional judgement. Ultimately the assessment of sensitivity and magnitude will lead to effects that are of **major**, **moderate**, **minor** or **negligible** significance.

Table A-5 Significance of the Effect to the Landscape and Visual Receptors

Magnitude of Effect	Description		
High	Moderate	Major	Major
Medium	Minor	Moderate	Major
Low	Minor	Minor	Moderate
Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
	Low	Medium	High
	Receptor Sensitivity		

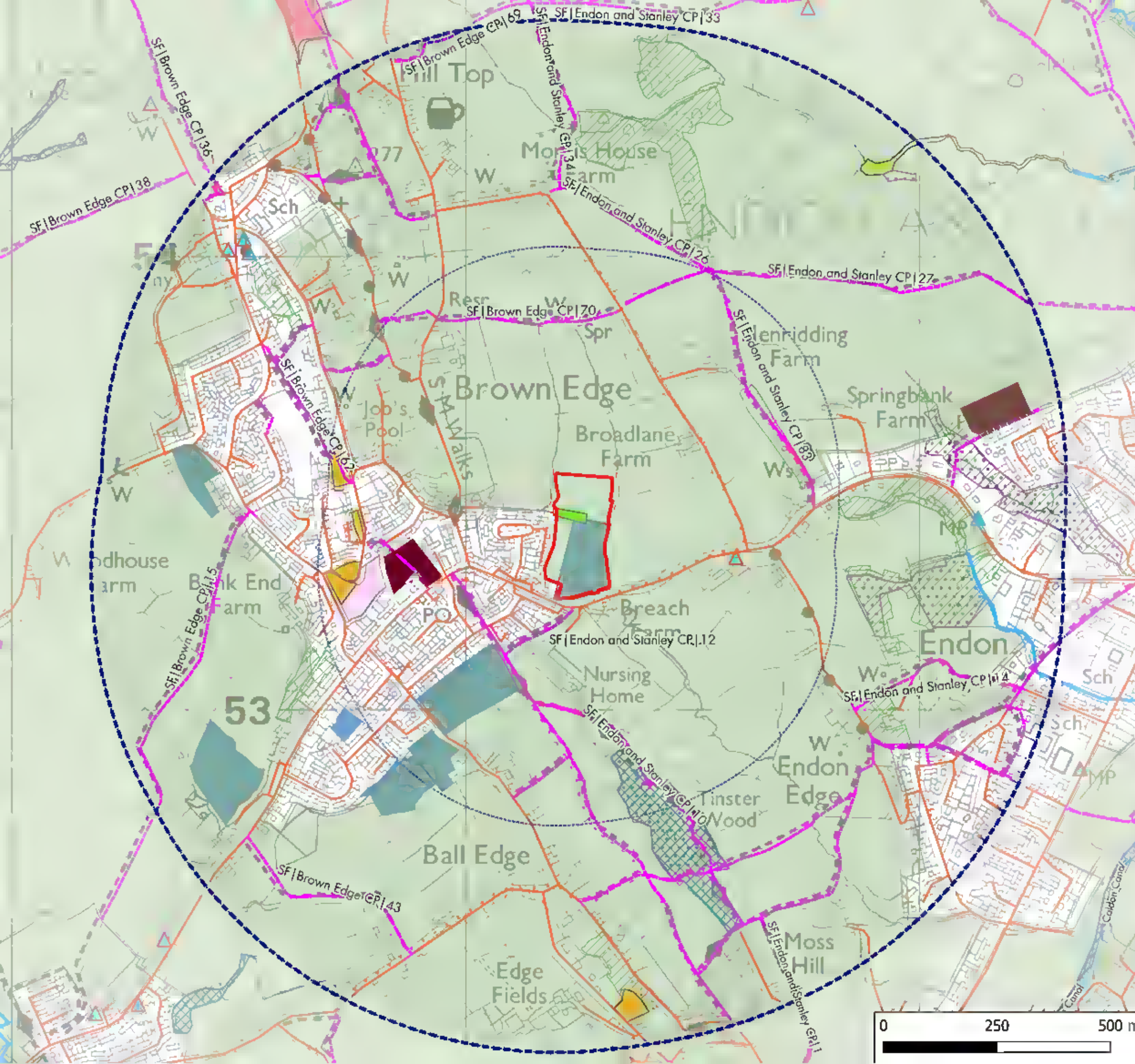
- 1.56 The following table A-6 provides a brief definition of the key landscape and visual significance criteria.

Table A-6 Definitions of Significance

Significance	Description
Major	Important or substantial change in landscapes of national, district or local importance, or substantial changes in views experienced by most sensitive visual receptors.
Medium	Noteworthy or medium change to sensitive landscape and visual conditions.
Low	Inconsiderable or small change in landscape and visual conditions.
Negligible	No discernible effect upon landscape or visual conditions. No effect or an effect that is beneath the level of perception, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error.

Figures

INF_N251349(08)001	Context and Designations
INF_N251349 (08)002	Landscape Character
INF_N251349 (08)003	ZTV and Viewpoint Locations
INF_N251349 (08)004	Local Topography and Features
INF_N251349 (08)004-009	Representative Viewpoints
INF_N251349 (03)001	Constraints and Opportunities



Legend

- Site boundary
- 500m buffers
- Extent of Study Area 1km
- Footpath
- Bridleway
- Roads

Grade II Listed Buildings

- ▲ II
- Registered Park and Gardens
- Local Nature Reserves
- CRoW Access Land
- Watercourse

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC) Adopted Local Plan 2020

- Biodiversity Action Site
- Green Belt
- TPOs
- Open Space/local green space

Checkley Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan 2021-2035

- Nature Conservation Site
- Site of Biological Importance
- Ancient Woodland

SMDC Green Belt Review Study 2015

- Potentially Suitable Housing Sites

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Breach Road, Brown Edge

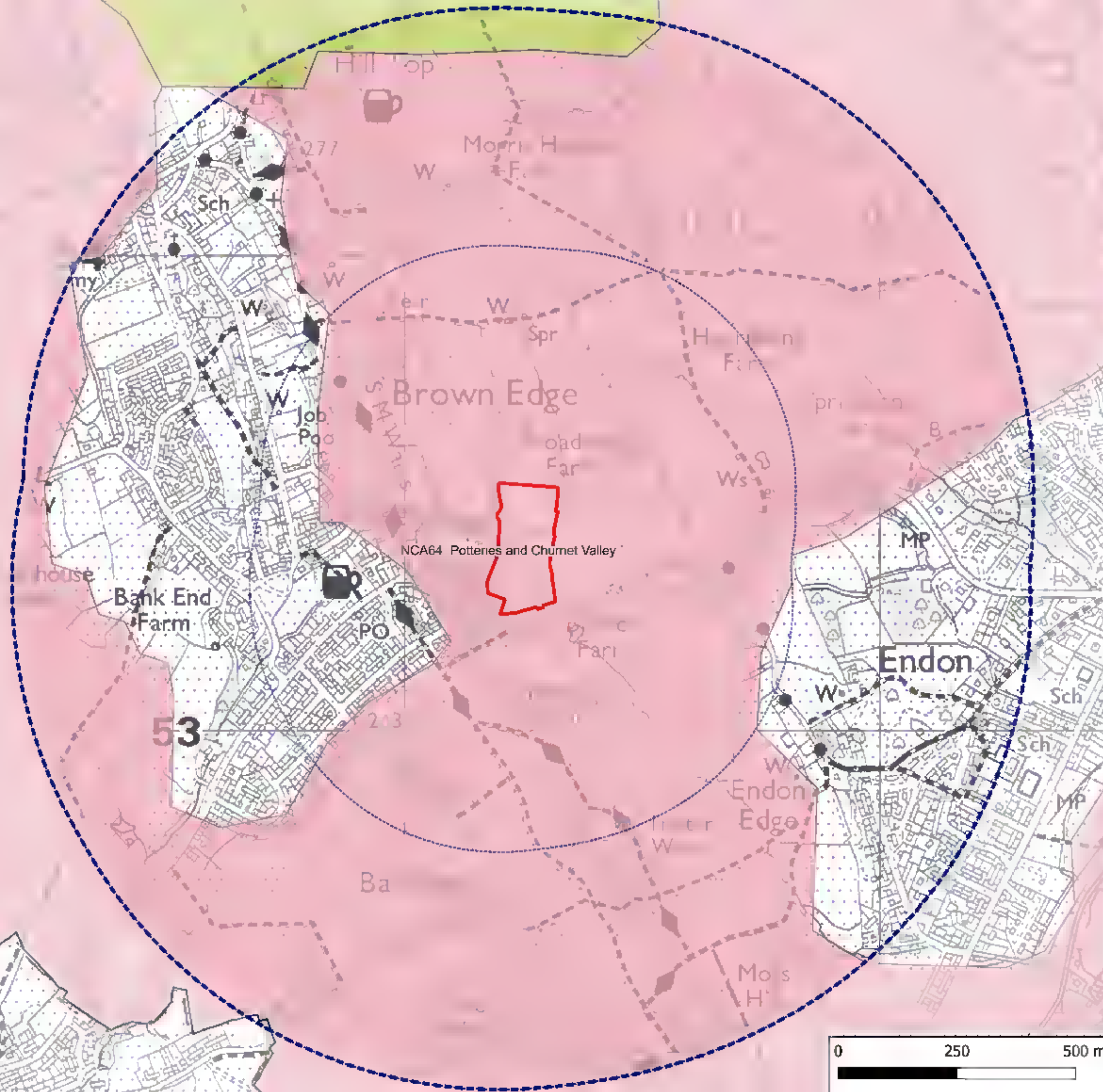
CLIENT

Debbie Evans

TITLE

Context and Designations Plan

STATUS	INITIAL	DATE	MAR 26
SCALE	NTS	CHECKED	MM
DRAWN	SM	REV NO	ORIGINAL SIZE
JOB NO:	DWG NO:		
N251349	(08)001		A3



Legend

- Site boundary
- 500m buffers
- Extent of Study Area 1km
- Local Authority Boundaries
- Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment of Staffordshire Moorlands**
- Ancient slope and valley farmlands LCT
- Gritstone uplands LCT
- National Character Areas**
- NCA64: Potteries and Churnet Valley

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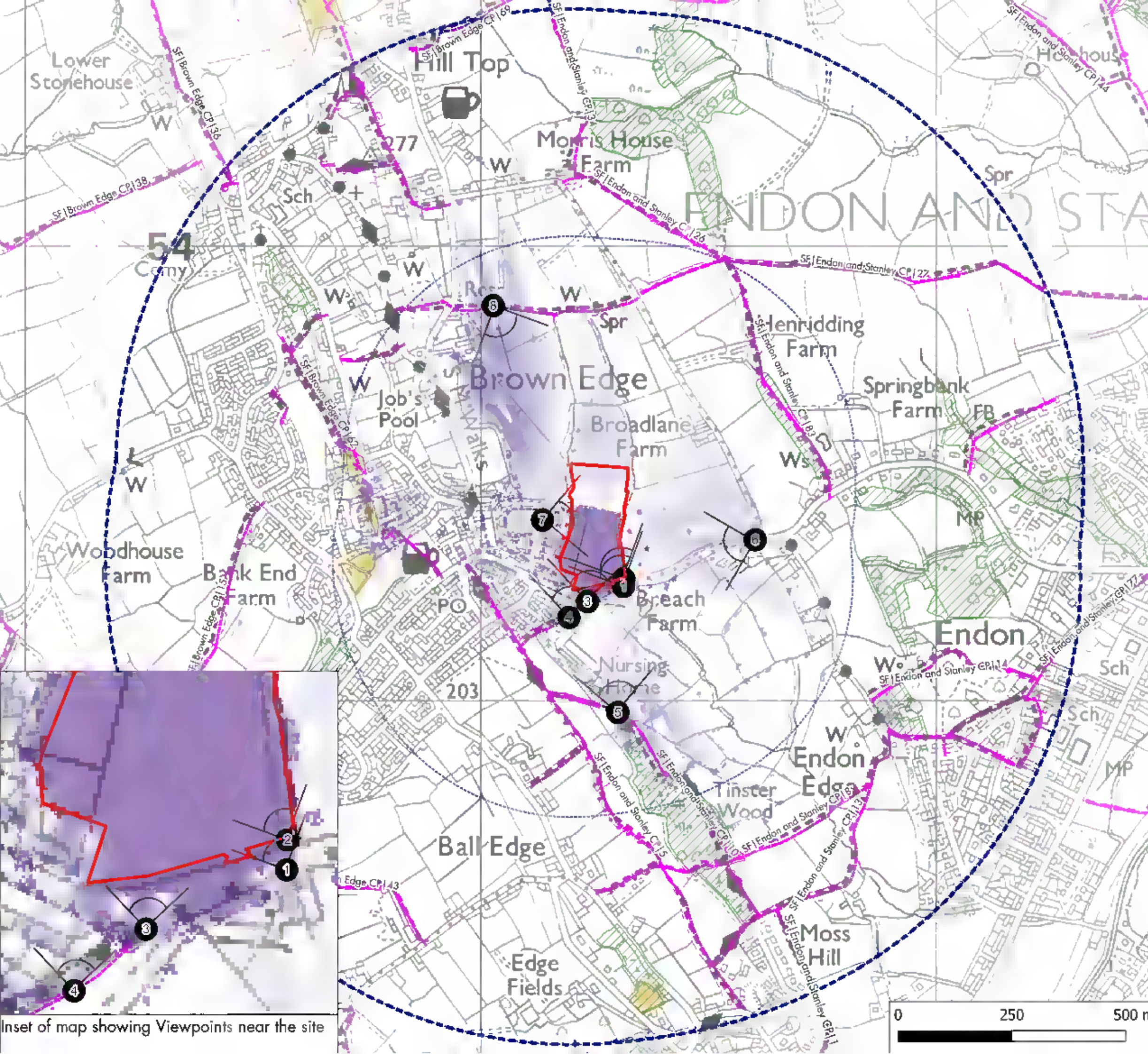
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TITLE
Landscape Character Plan

STATUS	INITIAL	DATE	MAR 26
SCALE	NTS	CHECKED	MM
DRAWN	SM	REV NO	ORIGINAL SIZE
JOB NO:	DWG NO:		
N251349	(08)002		A3



Legend

- Site boundary
- 500m buffers
- Extent of Study Area 1km

Viewpoints

Footpath

Bridleway

Woodland

Access Land

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (modelled at 9m ridge height)

Not theoretically visible

Theoretically visible

The ZTV illustrates the potential visibility of the proposed development based on digital surface modelling data. Therefore this takes into account objects that may occur in the landscape, such as woodland or building which may affect lines of sight.

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

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ZTV and Viewpoint Locations Plan

STATUS	INITIAL	DATE	MM
SCALE	NTS		

DRAWN	SM	CHECKED	MM
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JOB NO:	DWG NO:	REV NO	ORIGINAL SIZE
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N251349	(08)003		A3
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Viewpoint 01



Viewpoint 02

Viewpoint and Camera Details:

Camera:	Canon EOS 6D			
Lens:	50mm			
Date:	22.10.25			
Time/ OS Grid Reference:	VP01	11.14	SJ 391320 353259001m	202m
Distance to Site/ Elevation	VP02	11.14	SJ 391313 353264000m	202m

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.



VP 01 Location



VP 02 Location

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TITLE
Representative Viewpoints

STATUS	FINAL		
SCALE	NTS	DATE	10.25
DRAWN	SM	CHECKED	MM

JOB NO:	DWG NO:	REV NO:	ORIGINAL SIZE:
N251349	(08)004	-	A3



Viewpoint 03

Viewpoint and Camera Details:

Camera: Canon EOS 6D
Lens: 50mm
Date: 22.10.25

Time/ OS Grid Reference: VP03 11.19 SJ 391233 353226 016m 217m
Distance to Site/ Elevation

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VP 03 Location

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TITLE			
Representative Viewpoints			
STATUS	FINAL		
SCALE	NTS	DATE	10.25
DRAWN	SM	CHECKED	MM
JOB NO:	DWG NO:	REV NO:	ORIGINAL SIZE:
N251349	108005	-	A3



Viewpoint 04

Viewpoint and Camera Details:

Camera: Canon EOS 6D
Lens: 50mm
Date: 22.10.25

Time/ OS Grid Reference: VP04 11.21 SJ 391142 353169095 m 220m
Distance to Site/ Elevation

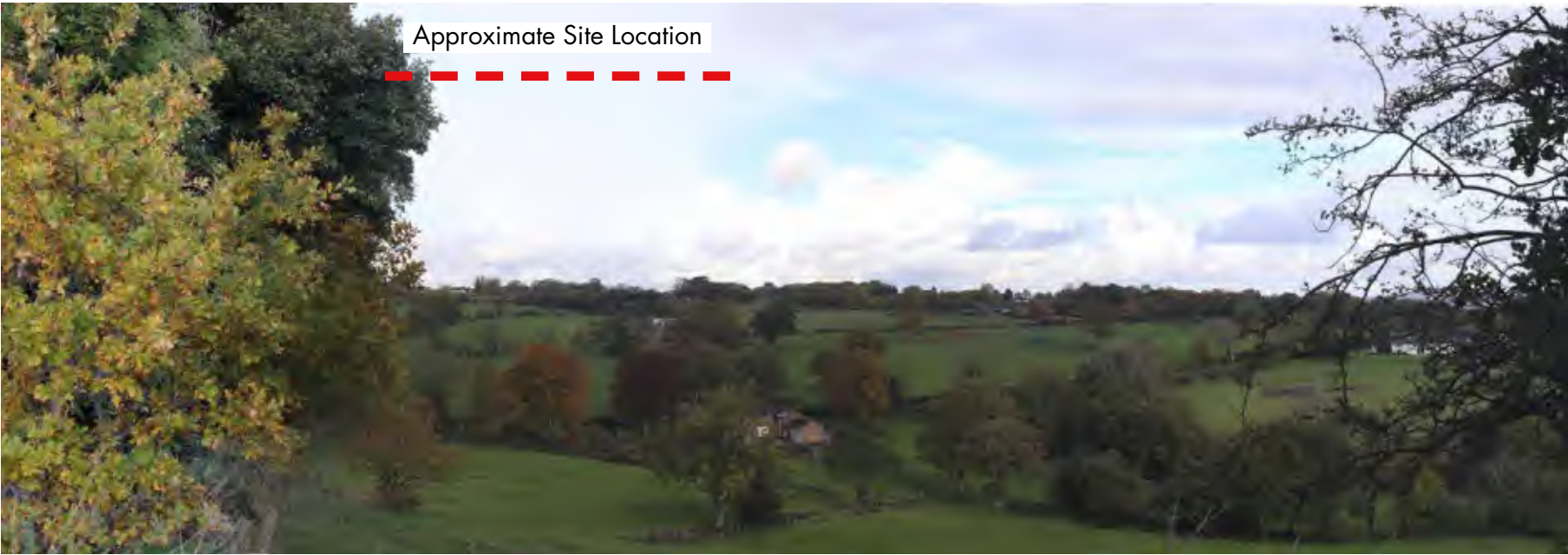
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VP 04 Location

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TITLE			
Representative Viewpoints			
STATUS	FINAL		
SCALE	NTS	DATE	10.25
DRAWN	SM	CHECKED	MM
JOB NO:	DWG NO:	REV NO:	ORIGINAL SIZE:
N251349	(08)006	-	A3



Viewpoint 05



Viewpoint 06

Viewpoint and Camera Details:

Camera:

Lens:

Date:

Canon EOS 6D
50mm
22.10.25

Time/ OS Grid Reference:

Distance to Site/ Elevation

VP05
VP06

11.30
12.11

SJ 391295
SJ 391599

352983 164m
353359 292m

224m
215m

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VP 05 Location



VP 06 Location

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Representative Viewpoints

STATUS

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SCALE

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DATE

10.25

DRAWN

SM

CHECKED

MM

JOB NO:

DWG NO:

REV NO:

ORIGINAL SIZE:

N251349

(08)007

-

A3



Viewpoint 07

Viewpoint and Camera Details:

Camera: Canon EOS 6D
Lens: 50mm
Date: 22.10.25

Time/ OS Grid Reference: VP07 12.24 SJ 391144 353404056m 211m
Distance to Site/ Elevation

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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Representative Viewpoints

STATUS	FINAL	DATE	10.25
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DRAWN	SM		

JOB NO:	DWG NO:	REV NO:	ORIGINAL SIZE:
N251349	(08)008	-	A3



Viewpoint 08

Viewpoint and Camera Details:

Camera: Canon EOS 6D
Lens: 50mm
Date: 22.10.25

Time/ OS Grid Reference: VP08 11.30 SJ 391295 352983 164m 224m
Distance to Site/ Elevation

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.



VP 08 Location

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TITLE
Representative Viewpoints

STATUS	FINAL	DATE	10.25
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DRAWN	SM		

JOB NO:	DWG NO:	REV NO:	ORIGINAL SIZE:
N251349	(08)009	-	A3



Key

- Site boundary
- Road
- Watercourse
- PRoW Footpath
- Existing Residential Developments
- Proposed Residential Development
- Existing Trees
- Existing Hedgerow
- Existing vehicle access
- Direction of Topography
- Potential new vehicle access

Constraints

- Middle distance partial views south of the site from Endon and Stanley CP/10 PRoW (part of the Staffordshire Moorland Walk)
- Green Belt
- Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) to the northern boundary of the site
- Existing trees to the eastern site boundary have bat roost potential
- Sensitive residential views
- Telegraph wires added

Opportunities

- Existing mature hedgerow boundary to the north, east and south of the site can be enhanced and act as a buffer
- SuD to the southwestern edge of the site for sustainable drainage
- Area to be enhanced to provide for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)
- Public Open Space (POS) to the southwestern edge of the site.
- LAP location

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TITLE
Constraints and Opportunities Plan

STATUS	FINAL	DATE	MAR 26
SCALE	NTS	CHECKED	MM
DRAWN	SM		

JOB NO:	DWGNO:	REV NO:	ORIGINAL SIZE
N251349	(03)001	#	A3

Midlands Office

The Wheelwrights
Huddlestons Wharf
Millgate, Newark
Notts NG24 4UL
+44 (0)1636 702152

London Office

Juxon House
100 St Paul's Churchyard
London EC4M 8BU
+44 (0)20 3102 7770

info@influence.co.uk
www.influence.co.uk

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