

HIGHGROVE FARM, BOSHAM

Preliminary Landscape and Visual Appraisal for a Potential Residential Development

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(Southampton)

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

SLR Consulting Ltd (SLR) was instructed by Barratt David Wilson Homes (Southampton), (BDW), to undertake a Preliminary Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVIA) of a potential residential development site at Highgrove Farm, Bosham, West Sussex.

The site is currently being promoted through the Local Plan process and consequently a detailed masterplan has not yet been prepared. The main objectives of this report are therefore to identify potential landscape and visual effects, and to advise on the overall design of the development and any mitigation measures.

1.1 Methodology

Given that this is at an early stage in the site planning process, it would be inappropriate to carry out a full landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA). However, the principles of this appraisal are in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition, 2013, also known as GLVIA3, produced by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013). A full method statement is included at Appendix A.

This assessment has been carried out by an experienced Chartered Landscape Architect. It is based upon a desk top assessment of relevant plans, guidance and character assessments, as well as a site assessment carried out in June 2018.

1.2 Study Area

The study area (which is larger than the potential area of visibility for the purposes of providing landscape context) is illustrated on drawing HF-001. The study area was identified through desk top analysis and by field survey.

2.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

2.1 National Policy: National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

NPPF paragraph 10 states that “*at the heart of the Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development***” (bold text as per NPPF). Paragraph 11 (d) states that “*where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are out-of-date, granting permission unless: (i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or (ii) the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole*”. Footnote 7 to this paragraph notes that out-of-date plans includes “*situations where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (with the appropriate buffer...)*”.

Paragraph 170 states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by (*inter alia*) “*a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes ... (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan*” and “*b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside*”.

Paragraph 172 states that “*great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues*”.

2.2 Designations

The site does not contain a designation based upon landscape or ecological value (see drawing HF-001 for a summary of landscape designations in the locality). However, it is immediately to the north of the Chichester Harbour AONB, which extends to the southern edge of Main Road (A259). The northern boundary of the site is also approximately 1.5 km from the South Downs National Park at its closes point. There are no listed buildings in the immediate vicinity of the site, and the nearest conservation areas are just under one kilometre to the east in Fishbourne, and over a kilometre to the south west in Bosham.

There are no public rights of way crossing the site, no open access areas, or village greens.

2.3 The Development Plan

2.3.1 Chichester Local Plan: Key Policies 2014-2029

Within this adopted plan, Policy 2 identifies Bosham/Broadbridge as a Service Village, and the plan states Service Villages will be the focus for new development and services. Policy 5 sets a target of 50 homes to be delivered in Bosham, and at the Local Plan Examination the Inspector stated that he expected to “*modify housing supply, distribution of housing development and quantum to be delivered by individual sites, to reflect the increased supply identified through the evidence audit*.” It is therefore anticipated that the housing requirements for Bosham will be increased beyond the 50 currently specified.

In the emerging Preferred Approach Local Plan Policy AL7 deals specifically with land at Highgrove Farm, Bosham, and proposes the allocation of the site for a “*minimum of 250 dwellings and a two-form entry primary school*”. The draft policy requires the provision of a “*high quality gateway feature into Bosham from the east*”, as well as the provision of on-site public open space and play areas, and landscaping to minimise the effects of the development on Bosham, the setting of the Chichester Harbour AONB and South Downs National Park.

2.3.2 The Bosham Neighbourhood Plan

The Bosham Parish Neighbourhood Plan was formally “made” in November 2016. This does not formally allocate any sites to meet the housing need set out in the Local Plan.

2.4 Planning History

2.4.1 Recent Planning History

Permission for 50 homes in the south west corner of the site was granted on 19th December 2018 (BO/17/03148).

3.0 The Landscape Character of the Site and Potential Landscape Effects of Development

3.1 Introduction

The following landscape assessment is based upon both a desk top assessment of existing character assessments and plans as well as a site-based survey. In accordance with GLVIA3 the main landscape receptors, (individual landscape elements, aesthetic characteristics, overall character), which have the potential to be affected by the proposed development have been identified and their sensitivity to the proposed development has been assessed by considering their value and susceptibility. The potential magnitude of change which would be experienced by each of these receptors has then been assessed by determining the size and scale of change, the geographical extent of that change, and the duration and reversibility of that change.

By combining the sensitivity of receptors and the magnitude of effect the potential for significant landscape effects has been assessed.

3.2 Existing Landscape Character Assessments

There is a nested series of existing character assessments which provide a useful context to the character of the site (see drawing HF-002). Further details of each are set out below.

3.2.1 National Landscape Character: Natural England

At a national scale the site is included on the edge of Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 126: South Coast Plain. The key characteristics of NCA 126 of relevance to the application site include the following:

- The plain slopes gently southwards towards the coast.
- In places, streams and rivers flow south from the higher land of the Downs to the sea.
- There are stretches of farmed land between developed areas, often with large arable fields defined by low hedges or ditches.
- The area has significant urban development, with settlements along the coastline dominated by the Portsmouth conurbation, suburban villages and seaside towns including Bognor Regis, Littlehampton and Worthing linked by major road and rail systems.

3.2.2 County Landscape Character: West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment (2003)

In the West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment the site is within character area SC5, Southbourne Coastal Plain. Key characteristics of SC5 which are relevant to this include the following:

- Low-lying flat open landscape;
- Long views to Chichester Harbour and to the distinctive spire of Chichester Cathedral;
- Suburban settlement dominates the area;
- Degraded tree and hedgerow framework;
- Large scale arable farming;
- Frequent urban fringe influences;
- Busy minor roads and major roads;

Management guidelines for this character area include the following:

- Create a new large scale tree and hedgerow framework to complement the open, intensively farmed landscape, whilst maintaining important views;
- Maintain and strengthen field boundaries such as hedgerows and shelterbelts;
- Conserve and link existing hedgerows and trees;
- Encourage the creation of new suburban woodlands;
- Encourage bold tree planting adjacent to roads to enhance both the visual and wildlife value of these areas;
- Restore and strengthen the landscape of the gaps between settlements;
- Strengthen the landscape framework and filter views of the urban edge through planting of woodland, tree and shrub belts and groups.

3.2.3 Chichester Landscape Capacity Study (2011)

In the Chichester Landscape Capacity Study the site is included within character area 91, Broadbridge-Fishbourne Coastal Plain. The character type is classified as C1c, Coastal Plain, large scale arable, semi-open.

Character area 91 is assessed as being of substantial sensitivity, partly on the basis that there are “no discernible views of the South Downs or Chichester Harbour” but also because of the influence of pylons, the A27 and small scale development resulting in “low scenic beauty”. The site is described as a “pleasant arable landscape although influence from significant surrounding settlement limits tranquillity and remoteness”. It is concluded that the capacity for development in character area 91 is Low/Medium.

3.3 The Landscape of the Site and its Context

The site is a mostly open, flat arable landscape, with a degraded hedgerow network. The predominantly rural character of the site is also influenced by urban elements, including the busy A259 to the south, the railway line to the north, the existing prominent settlement edge to the west, the industrial buildings associated with Highfield Farm to the south, further industrial buildings at Ham Farm and houses to the east of the site, as well as pylons running parallel with the railway to the north.

There are distant views across the east of the site from the A259 towards the high ground of the South Downs, and also some glimpsed long views across the north of the site towards the spire of Chichester Cathedral (although this is partly screened by industrial buildings at Ham Farm). There are no views of Chichester Harbour, and views of the AONB are limited to the fields immediately south of the A259.

The main elements and aesthetic aspects of the landscape can be summarised as follows:

- Open, flat, arable land, with predominantly rural character;
- Hedgerow network in generally poor condition, frequently breached or missing;
- Strong influence of urban elements including traffic on A259, railway to north of site, pylons, prominent settlement edge particularly to north west of site, industrial buildings at Highgrove Farm;
- Glimpsed views of the spire of Chichester Cathedral across north of site to east, and long views of South Downs across east of site to north.

The overall character of the site accords with the description of the Southbourne Coastal Plain within the West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment.

3.4 Sensitivity of the Landscape

In accordance with GLVIA3 the sensitivity of the landscape receptors on site is determined by combining their value with their susceptibility to the type of development proposed.

3.4.1 Value of the Landscape

In determining the value of landscapes it is helpful to start with landscape and landscape-related designations. In this context it is important to note that the site is not included within a statutory or non-statutory landscape designation, and nor is it within a landscape-related designation. It is also important to note that the site is allocated for residential development in the emerging Local Plan, and permission for fifty new homes has been granted in the south west corner of the site. However, the site is also in close proximity to the Chichester Harbour AONB and also has distant views of the South Downs National Park.

GLVIA3 states that the value of undesignated sites should also be considered, and box 5.1 provides a helpful guide for assessing these sites. In this context it is important to note that the site has no cultural associations, and that there is no formal recreational access to the site. The condition and scenic quality of the site is reduced by the degraded landscape structure and the influence of urban elements on all sides. The site also has no formal heritage or ecological value. It is likely that views over open fields from the footpath and properties will be valued by local residents, and consequently it is concluded that the value of the site overall is between low and community. This judgement is corroborated by the assessment of slight in the Chichester Landscape Capacity Study.

3.4.2 Susceptibility of the Landscape

The susceptibility of the landscape of the site to accommodate residential development is raised by the agricultural land-uses and open, flat fields, but is also reduced by the prominence of existing development on all sides of the site as well as the recent residential permission at the south west corner of the site. It is therefore concluded that the overall susceptibility of the site to residential development is medium, although this increases to medium to high to the east of Highgrove Farm where there are open views towards the South Downs, which would potentially be screened if housing were to be placed in this location.

3.4.3 Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

In overview, the site has a low/community value and a medium susceptibility to residential development to the west, becoming medium to high to the east of Highgrove Farm. The overall sensitivity of the landscape receptors to residential development is therefore medium/low to the west, and medium to the east.

3.5 Potential Magnitude of Landscape Change

In accordance with GLVIA3 potential changes to the individual landscape receptors have been assessed in relation to:

- The Size and Scale of Change;
- The Geographical Extent of Change; and
- The Duration and Reversibility of Change.

3.5.1 Size and Scale of Change for Landscape Receptors

Residential development would result in the introduction of new structures to a predominantly flat, open, arable landscape; however, the scale of change caused by this would be reduced to some extent due to the prominence of existing settlement edges and other urban elements. It could also be possible to reduce the landscape effects of development by:

- Minimising development to the east of Highgrove Farm to allow open views to the South Downs;
- Screening both the existing and proposed settlement edge with new woodland;
- Reinstating the landscape structure of the site including new woodlands adjacent to the railway and road, and along the settlement edge;
- Providing new habitats;
- Providing green ways through the proposed housing which could also allow long views from the settlement edge towards Chichester Cathedral.

3.5.2 Geographical Extent of Change for Landscape Receptors

Residential development on the site would affect a number of the landscape receptors across the site.

However, it is likely that there would be very little effect on the character of landscapes around the site, as the proposed development could be contained by existing structures as well as proposed new woodland planting.

3.5.3 Duration/Reversibility of Change for Landscape Receptors

The development would be permanent.

3.5.4 Potential Magnitude of Change for Landscape Receptors

It is likely that residential development on the site would result in localised significant landscape effects for some receptors, most notably the open arable fields at the west of Highgrove Farm. However, these effects would be limited to a part of the site which is already strongly influenced by the settlement edge. The effects could also be mitigated by minimising development at the east of the site, new woodland planting, the creation of greenways, and conserving long views towards the South Downs and Chichester Cathedral.

3.6 Summary of Landscape Character and Potential Landscape Effects of Development

The site has been allocated for residential development in the emerging Local Plan. Permission for fifty new homes in the south west corner of the site was granted in December 2018.

The site has been classified as Southbourne Coastal Plain in the West Sussex landscape character assessment, and as part of the Broadbridge-Fishbourne Coastal Plain in the Chichester Landscape Capacity Study. The West Sussex Assessment recommends that new woodlands should be created along roads and settlement edges. The Chichester Capacity Study states that the area is of substantial sensitivity but only slight value, with a low to medium capacity to accommodate new development.

The site comprises open, flat, arable land, which is influenced by existing urban elements on all sides. There are long, glimpsed views across the north of the site to Chichester Cathedral to the east, and across the east of the site to the South Downs, to the north.

It is likely that development on this site would result in localised significant landscape effects. However, effects on landscape receptors around the site could be limited if new areas of woodland planting are established as

recommended within the West Sussex landscape character assessment. Landscape effects could also be mitigated by minimising the extent of development to the east of Highgrove Farm, establishing new woodland planting, enhancing biodiversity, and by introducing greenways which could help to conserve views towards Chichester Cathedral.

4.0 POTENTIAL VISUAL EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Introduction

Overall visibility has been determined by a desk top assessment of plans and aerial photographs and by site visit.

Four viewpoint locations have been identified to represent the range of views available around the site. The objective in selecting these locations has been to represent the range of views of the existing site which are available from publicly accessible locations.

The location of all viewpoints is illustrated on drawing HF-003. For each of the viewpoints photographs of the existing views have been included (see drawings HF-004 to HF-007).

In accordance with the recommendations of GLVIA3 the potential level of visual effects has been determined by assessing both the sensitivity of visual receptors and the potential magnitude of visual effect.

4.2 Overall Visibility

The potential visibility of development on site would be confined by the existing settlement edge to the west; by existing hedgerows and trees at the northern edge of the AONB to the south; by woodlands to the north and by the high ground within the South Downs; and by existing vegetation and buildings to the east of the site.

Whilst it is possible that views from elevated locations within the National Park could be possible, these are at least 4km from the site boundary and consequently the site would occupy only a very small proportion of the total view.

4.3 Potential Visual Receptors

Within the visual envelope of the potential development the following types of visual receptors have the potential to experience changes in their views:

- Residential receptors on Brooks Lane and Barnside, to the west of the site (there are also some isolated properties to the south of Main Road);
- Pedestrians on the pavements along Main Road (A259) and potentially on the footpath between Fishbourne and Bosham within the AONB (although intervening vegetation limits views from this direction);
- Cyclists using the A259 (National Cycle Route 2);
- Vehicle users on the A259;
- Passengers on the trains running to the north of the site.

4.4 Assessment of Sensitivity of Potential Visual Receptors

Residential receptors, walkers and cyclists are likely to be particularly susceptible to change, as they are more likely to be focused on views of the landscape. Vehicle users and train passengers are less susceptible to visual change as they have only transitional views of the landscape.

In relation to value, none of the viewpoints to the west, north or east of the site are within landscape or landscape-related designations, nor are they linked with visitor destinations or cultural associations. Main Road, to the south, is a national cycle route and is also on the northern edge of the Chichester Harbour AONB.

It therefore follows that walkers and cyclists on Main Road have the highest sensitivity to change on the site, with residents to the west of the site being of medium to high sensitivity. Vehicle users on Main Road would be of medium sensitivity.

4.5 Potential Magnitude of Change for Receptors

The criteria used for this analysis are taken from GLVIA 3 paragraphs 6.31 to 6.41, which include size/scale, geographical extent and duration.

For walkers and cyclists using Main Road, views over the site to the west of Highgrove Farm will change to include new homes at some point, since this area now has planning permission for the construction of fifty new homes (see for example viewpoint 2, HF-005). Views from the section of the road and pavement to the east of Highgrove Farm would not be subject to significant change if development is limited in this part of the site; importantly, long views could be retained, and both the existing and proposed settlement edge could be screened by new woodland planting (see viewpoint 3, HF-006).

For residential receptors to the west of the site it is likely that the nature of views would change to some extent, since the existing open views would be replaced by views towards new homes. However, it would be possible to include new green ways which could provide some open views, including views towards Chichester Cathedral across the north of the site (see for example viewpoint 1, HF-004). Residential receptors to the south of Main Road currently have views of existing buildings along Main Road, with the South Downs visible on the skyline, and these long views towards the Downs would continue to be visible if the site were to be developed (see for example viewpoint 4, HF-007).

There are likely to be clear views of the development for train passengers, but these effects would be transitional.

4.6 Assessment of Potential Visual Effects of Development

New housing on the site is likely to result in some localised significant visual effects, most probably for residents to the west of the site.

Whilst cyclists and pedestrians on Main Road would be the most sensitive receptors in the locality, it is possible that significant effects could be avoided in the long term if the eastern part of the site is left largely free from development, and if the eastern edge of proposed housing is screened by new woodland.

Effects on vehicle users on Main Road and train passengers are likely to be less than significant.

4.7 Summary of Potential Visual Effects

Whilst the visual envelope of any development could potentially extend into the South Downs, to the north, it is only the elevated areas of this designation which would be able to obtain views, and these are over 4km from the site. There is also potential for views from the northern edge of the AONB, but views from residential receptors and footpaths in this location are largely screened by intervening vegetation and existing buildings, and long views towards the South Downs on the skyline would continue to be visible. All other views of the site are limited to the immediate locality.

Significant visual effects are likely to be limited to residential receptors to the west of the site. Significant long term effects on cyclists and pedestrians using Main Road could be avoided if housing is limited to the west of Highgrove Farm (to the north of the existing allocation), and if new woodland is established along the new settlement edge.

There would be no significant effects for vehicle users on Main Road or train passengers using the railway line to the north of the site.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE MASTERPLAN AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Based upon this preliminary landscape and visual appraisal it is recommended that the masterplan incorporates the following elements in order to respect local character and protect views:

- Minimise development to the east of Highgrove Farm, in order to continue to allow long views from Main Road towards the South Downs;
- Provide green ways across the proposed development area, including a green way to allow views from the existing settlement edge towards Chichester Cathedral;
- Provide new areas of woodland along the new settlement edge, along the railway and along the A259 (whilst also allowing vistas towards the South Downs and Chichester Cathedral);
- Also provide new woodland along the eastern boundary of the site to enhance the sense of visual separation between Broadbridge and Fishbourne;
- Provide additional habitat at the east of the site, including species-rich grassland.

APPENDIX A

Criteria and Definitions Used in Preliminary Landscape and Visual Assessments

Introduction

Preliminary Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVA) is a tool used to identify the potential effects of development on *“landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and visual amenity”* (GLVIA3, paragraph 1.1). It is an assessment used at an early stage in the site planning or masterplanning process, before the design has been fully resolved.

Although LVA does not consider detailed landscape and visual effects as a landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) does, it still follows the principles set out in GLVIA3.¹ GLVIA3 is the main source of guidance on LVIA.

Landscape is a definable set of characteristics resulting from the interaction of natural, physical and human factors: it is a resource in its own right. Its assessment is distinct from visual assessment, which considers effects on the views and visual amenity of different groups of people at particular locations. Clear separation of these two topics is recommended in GLVIA3.

As GLVIA3 (paragraph 2.23) states, professional judgement is an important part of the LVIA (and LVA) process: whilst there is scope for objective measurement of landscape and visual changes, much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements. It is critical that these judgements are based upon a clear and transparent method so that the reasoning can be followed and examined by others.

Landscape and visual effects can be positive, negative or neutral in nature. Positive effects are those which enhance and/or reinforce the characteristics which are valued. Negative effects are those which remove and/or undermine the characteristics which are valued. Neutral effects are changes which are consistent with the characteristics of the landscape or view.

¹ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ (Third Edition, April 2013)

Landscape Effects

Landscape, as defined in the European Landscape Convention, is defined as “*an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*”, (Council of Europe, 2000). Landscape does not apply only to special or designated places, nor is it limited to countryside.

GLVIA3 (paragraph 5.34) recommends that the effect of the development on landscape receptors is assessed. Landscape receptors are the components of the landscape that are likely to be affected by the proposed development, and can include individual elements (such as hedges or buildings), aesthetic and perceptual characteristics (for example sense of naturalness, tranquillity or openness), or, at a larger scale, the character of a defined character area or landscape type. Designated areas (such as National Parks or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are also landscape receptors.

This assessment is being undertaken because the proposed development has the potential to remove or add elements to the landscape, to alter aesthetic or perceptual aspects, and to add or remove characteristics and thus potentially change overall character.

Judging landscape effects requires a methodical assessment of the sensitivity of the landscape receptors to the proposed development and the magnitude of effect which would be experienced by each receptor.

Landscape Sensitivity

Sensitivity of landscape receptors is assessed by combining an assessment of the susceptibility of landscape receptors to the type of change which is proposed with the value attached to the landscape. (GLVIA3, paragraph 5.39).

Value Attached to Landscape Receptors

Landscape receptors may be valued at community, local, national or international level. Existing landscape designations provide the starting point for this assessment.

Where landscapes are not designated and where no other local authority guidance on value is available, an assessment is made by reference to criteria in Box 5.1 of GLVIA3 which in turn is based on the Landscape Character Assessment Guidance of 2002². In accordance with the judgement of Justice Ouseley,³ the landscape and visual attributes of the site as a whole are also reviewed to determine whether the site has demonstrable physical attributes which elevate it above ordinary countryside.

Susceptibility of Landscape Receptors to Change

As set out in GLVIA3, susceptibility refers to the ability of the landscape receptor to “*accommodate the proposed development without undue adverse consequences for the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies*”. Judgement of susceptibility is particular to the specific characteristics of the proposed development and the ability of a particular landscape or feature to accommodate the type of change proposed.

² Swanwick C and Land Use Consultants (2002), Landscape Character Assessment for England and Scotland, Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage

³ CO/4082/2014 Neutral Citation Number: [2015] EWHC 488 (Admin) In the High Court of Justice Queen's Bench Division the Administrative Court Before: Mr Justice Ouseley Between: Stroud District Council, Claimant V Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Defendant

Magnitude of Landscape Change

The magnitude of landscape change is established by assessing the size or scale of change, the geographical extent of the area influenced and the duration and potential reversibility of the change.

Size and Scale of Change

The size and/or scale of change in the landscape takes into consideration the following factors:

- the extent/proportion of landscape elements lost or added; and/or
- the degree to which aesthetic/perceptual aspects are altered; and
- whether this is likely to change the key characteristics of the landscape.

The criteria used to assess the size and scale of landscape change are based upon the amount of change that will occur as a result of the proposed development, as described in Table A5 below.

Geographical Extent of Change

The geographical extent of landscape change is assessed by determining the area over which the changes will influence the landscape. For example this could be at the site level, in the immediate setting of the site, or over some or all of the landscape character types or areas affected.

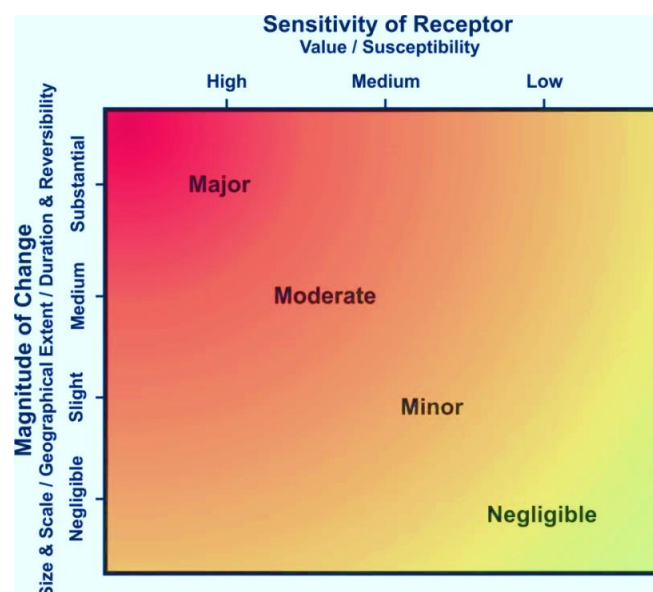
Duration and Reversibility of Change

The duration of the landscape change considers whether the change will be permanent and irreversible or temporary and reversible.

Assessment of Landscape Effects and Significance

The assessment of landscape effects and their significance is defined in terms of the relationship between the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of the change. The diagram below (Figure A1) summarises the nature of the relationship but it is not formulaic. Judgements are made about each landscape effect using this diagram as a guide.

Fig A1: Assessment of Landscape Effects and Overall Significance



Visual Effects

Visual effects are the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. Visual receptors are the people whose views may be affected by the proposed development. They generally include users of public rights of way or other recreational facilities or attractions; travellers who may pass through the study area because they are visiting, living or working there; residents living in the study area, either as individuals or, more often, as a community; and people at their place of work.

Judging visual effects requires an assessment of the sensitivity of the visual receptors to the proposed development and the magnitude of effect which would be experienced by each receptor.

Viewpoints are chosen for a variety of reasons but most commonly because they represent views experienced by relevant groups of people.

Visual Sensitivity

Sensitivity of visual receptors is assessed by combining an assessment of the susceptibility of visual receptors to the type of change which is proposed with the value attached to the views. (GLVIA3, paragraph 6.30).

Value Attached to Views

Different levels of value are attached to the views experienced by particular groups of people at particular viewpoints. Assessment of value takes account of a number of factors, including:

- Recognition of the view through some form of planning designation or by its association with particular heritage assets; and
- The popularity of the viewpoint, in part denoted by its appearance in guidebooks, literature or art, or on tourist maps, by information from stakeholders and by the evidence of use including facilities provided for its enjoyment (seating, signage, parking places, etc.); and
- Other evidence of the value attached to views by people including consultation with local planning authorities and professional assessment of the quality of views.

Susceptibility of Visual Receptors to Change

The susceptibility of different types of people to changes in views is mainly a function of:

- The occupation or activity of the viewer at a given viewpoint; and
- The extent to which the viewer's attention or interest be focussed on a particular view and the visual amenity experienced at a given view.

Magnitude of Visual Change

The magnitude of visual change is established by assessing the size or scale of change, the geographical extent of the area influenced and the duration and potential reversibility of the change.

Size and Scale of Change

The criteria used to assess the size and scale of visual change at each viewpoint are as follows:

- the scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view, changes in its composition, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development and distance of view;

- the degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of factors such as form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture; and
- the nature of the view of the proposed development, for example whether views will be full, partial or glimpses or sequential views while passing through the landscape.

Geographical Extent of Change

The geographical extent of the visual change identified at representative viewpoints is assessed by reference to a combination of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), where this has been prepared, and field work.

The following factors are considered for each representative viewpoint:

- the angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;
- the distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development; and
- the extent of the area over which changes would be visible.

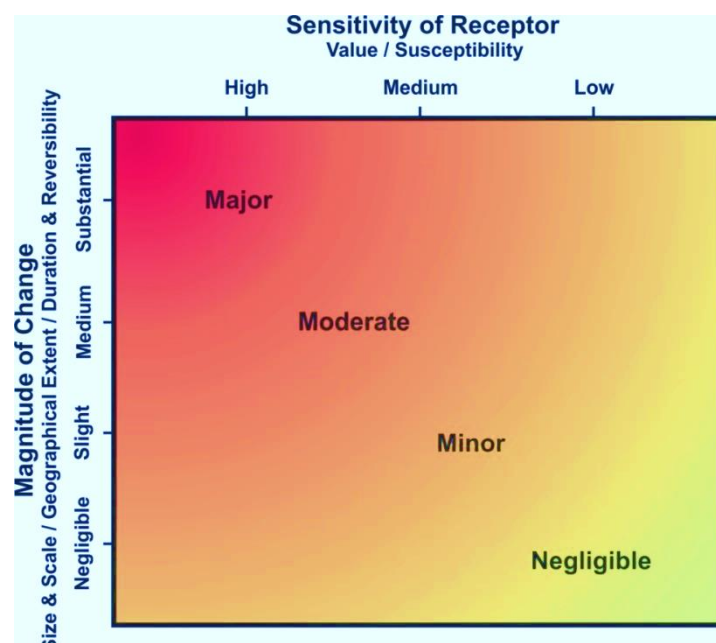
Duration and Reversibility of Change

The duration of the visual change includes consideration of whether views will be permanent and irreversible or temporary and reversible.

Assessment of Visual Effects and Significance

The assessment of visual effects is defined in terms of the relationship between the sensitivity of the visual receptors (value and susceptibility) and the magnitude of the change. The diagram below (Figure A2) summarises the nature of the relationship but it is not formulaic and only indicates broad levels of effect. Judgements are made about each visual effect using this diagram as a guide.

Figure A2: Assessment of Visual Effects and Overall Significance



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