

Test Valley Local Plan (2020-2040)

Regulation 18 (Stage 2) Version

Representations on behalf of:
Barratt David Wilson Homes (Southampton)

Land at Homestead Farm, Weyhill Road, Andover

March 2024



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Gillings Planning are instructed by our client, **Barratt David Wilson Homes (Southampton)** ('**BDW**') to make Representations on the Regulation 18 (Stage 2) version of the emerging Test Valley Local Plan 2040 (the 'Local Plan').
- 1.2 These representations have been prepared by Peter Home MRTPI, as a Director of Gillings Planning Ltd. I confirm that I understand and accept that my responses will be published alongside my name, my organisation and the name of my client.

BDW's Land Interest

- 1.3 BDW has various land interests within Test Valley Borough, however, these representations relate only to their specific land interest in a site known as **Homestead Farm, Weyhill Road, Andover**. This site is known to the council by the SHELAA Reference number 281 and is identified in red on Figure 1 below. The site is located to the north of Weyhill Road on the western edge of Andover.

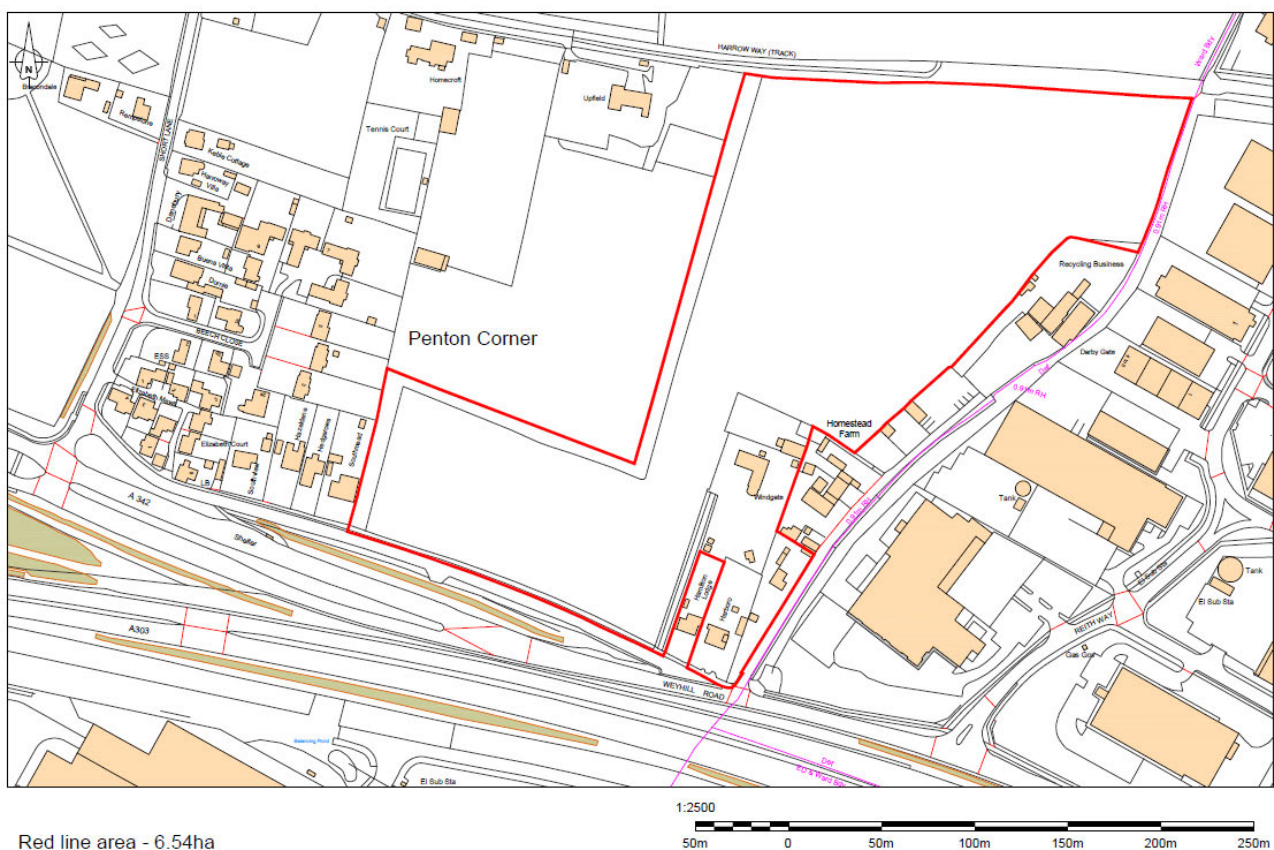


Figure 1: Plan showing the location of the site: Homestead Farm, Weyhill Road

- 1.4 The site measures approximately 6.54 hectares and currently comprises two pastoral fields that adjoin the settlement boundary of Andover as well as two existing residential dwellings ('Windgate' and 'Harboro') at the southeast corner of the site, which are located within the settlement boundary of Andover. The site is therefore a mix of 'greenfield' and previously developed land, albeit that the great majority of the site is greenfield and in agricultural use. It

should be noted that the existing dwelling to the immediate west of 'Harboro' (which is called 'Hamilton Lodge') is excluded from the site.

- 1.5 Having undertaken significant technical and design work on the site and following positive engagement with local community representatives (as described in Section 12 below), it is our firm belief that the site is suitable, available and deliverable for residential development. Further, we consider that the site presents a valuable opportunity to provide a sustainably located medium-scale strategic extension to the west of Andover, which can deliver approximately 180 dwellings, including much-needed affordable housing, with the majority being completed within the first five-year period of the emerging Local Plan (see Section 8 for a full delivery trajectory).
- 1.6 We note and support that the council's local plan evidence base considers the site to be suitable and available for development. However, we disagree with the omission of the site from the proposed site allocations within the North of Test Valley and we consider that some of the council's evidence in this regard is flawed or has not been taken into account and that this has led the council to draw incorrect and misguided conclusions about the site and its consistency with the proposed spatial strategy.

Barratt David Wilson Homes

- 1.7 Barratt David Wilson Homes is part of 'Barratt Developments PLC' and has been building high quality homes since 1958, with an industry-leading reputation for quality, innovation and customer service. Over the last sixty years, the company has built more than 450,000 homes, and millions of people have called a Barratt house their home. BDW are the only major national housebuilder to achieve the '*HBF 5 Star Customer Satisfaction*' rating for fifteen consecutive years, with over 90% of customers stating that they would recommend the company.

Structure of these Representations

- 1.8 The remainder of these representations are structured as follows:
- **Sections 2, 3 and 4** set out our representations on the Local Plan 2040 consultation document;
 - **Section 5** covers the Local Plan Policies Map;
 - **Sections 6 and 7** set out our representations on the Interim Sustainability Appraisal Report and Appendix IV to this;
 - **Sections 8 to 11** set out representations on various evidence documents that underpin the Local Plan, including the SHELAA, the Landscape Sensitivity Study, Local Gaps Assessment and the Housing Trajectory Document;
 - Finally, **Section 12** sets out our client's evidence to support the case for the allocation of the site for residential development as well as a summary of the engagement with local community representatives that has been undertaken.
- 1.9 We have included a number of documents prepared on behalf of our client within the **Appendices** to these representations. These include the Landscape and Visual evidence that has been prepared by SLR as well as the Vision Document for the site, prepared by BDW.

2.0 Local Plan Chapter 3: Spatial Strategy

Sustainable Spatial Strategy

- 2.1 Paragraphs 3.12-3.18 of the Local Plan, including the text box on page 32 and the Key Diagram on page 33, collectively set out the Spatial Strategy. We have also noted the 'Spatial Strategy Topic Paper' that supports this part of the Plan. We support the Spatial Strategy as it is expressed within these paragraphs. In particular, we agree with the continued emphasis, drawn from the consultation on the Stage 1 Regulation 18 Local Plan, that the key and most sustainable towns in the Borough (Andover and Romsey) should continue to be the primary focus for strategic development. These areas benefit from the best range of services, facilities and employment locations and have by far the best sustainable transport choices available.
- 2.2 In light of the emphasis on this spatial strategy, it is surprising to see that 1,500 dwellings have been allocated to the eastern edge of Ludgershall, within what is a rural location on the Test Valley side of the boundary. The Spatial Strategy section of the Local Plan makes no reference whatsoever to Ludgershall and does not explain how the allocation of such a large quantity of housing in this remote location is consistent with the overall Spatial Strategy, given that Ludgershall is not a key settlement or even a 'larger settlement' within Test Valley.
- 2.3 We consider that the allocation of strategic development to Ludgershall represents simply an opportunistic route through which delivery of homes at Andover can be reduced and homes delivered instead within a peripheral part of the Borough, where no existing residents of Test Valley would be impacted. We firmly believe that the Spatial Strategy should be delivered, as described in paragraphs 3.12-3.18, focusing on key Test Valley settlements and areas close to key sources of employment, with appropriate distributions to rural settlements within the Borough. Strategic allocations at Ludgershall are not consistent with the Spatial Strategy as described.
- 2.4 We have a number of specific concerns about the sustainability and deliverability of the proposed Ludgershall allocations and these are set out in Section 3 below.

Settlement Hierarchy

- 2.5 We support the proposed settlement hierarchy, as set out in **Policy 1 (SS1): Settlement Hierarchy**. This is based on appropriate and proportionate evidence and is consistent with the emerging proposals within the Regulation 18 (Stage 1) Local Plan consultation. Again, we note that Ludgershall is not a part of the Settlement Hierarchy and is not referred to in Policy 1 (SS1), nor is it identified on the plan on page 39.
- 2.6 Our understanding is that the council have undertaken no assessment of the sustainability or otherwise of Ludgershall and have simply accepted the designation of that settlement as 'Tier 2' in the settlement hierarchy as set out within the 2015 Wiltshire Core Strategy; a local plan that is now almost 10 years old.

Meeting Our Housing Needs

- 2.7 We agree with the council that the 'Standard Methodology' as set out in National Planning Guidance, should be the starting point and represents the minimum number of homes needed, in accordance with the NPPF (December 2023). For Test Valley this was 541 dpa at the time the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was undertaken in 2022 and is now 550 dpa. However, as the Local Plan recognises in paragraph 3.51, a key objective of the NPPF is to

boost the supply of new homes. However, it is clear from looking at past levels of housing delivery within Test Valley that 550 dpa is well below what has been delivered across the area in recent years. Even in the past three years (2020-2023) where delivery has been strongly challenged by both the Covid pandemic and by the need for 'nutrient neutrality' an average of 709 dwellings have been delivered each year across the Borough.

- 2.8 This demonstrates clearly that whilst 550 dpa does represent a 'starting point', it is not a sufficient number of homes to ensure that Test Valley, as a relatively unconstrained area, performs its proper role in helping to meet housing needs and addressing the objective of the NPPF to boost the supply of homes. As we detail further below (in relation to the Sustainability Appraisal), the council's own appraisal of growth scenario options and suitable development sites has demonstrated clearly that the Borough has ample capacity and has an excess of suitable and available sites which could be used to significantly boost housing delivery in the area. It is the council's choice not to boost its housing delivery beyond the national policy minimum, despite the evidence which indicates clearly that it should do so. This represents a failure of ambition and insufficient recognition of the broad level of housing need, across all types of homes, both within the Borough and within the wider local area.
- 2.9 We consider that there are two specific and relevant reasons why the number of homes to be delivered within the Borough over the Plan Period should be increased, above the 11,000 homes (550 dpa) indicated in **Policy 3 (SS3) Housing Requirement**. The first reason is the need to significantly increase the level of affordable homes that will be provided and the second is to make a meaningful contribution to the acknowledged significant level of unmet needs of Test Valley's neighbouring authorities.

Affordable Housing Need

- 2.10 We recognise that the SHMA considered the likely level of affordable housing need, with an estimated annual need for 437 rented affordable homes. This is notionally 79% of the current minimum 'Local Housing Need' (LHN) of 550 dwellings per annum. It is also acknowledged that the SHMA expressed caution in trying to make a direct link between affordable need and planned delivery. Whilst that is accepted, it is unsatisfactory that neither the SHMA, nor any other evidence document provides any clear target for affordable housing. Instead, the council simply considers that the amount of affordable housing delivered will necessarily be limited to the amount that can viably be provided through the minimum 'LHN' target of 550 dpa.
- 2.11 Paragraph 63 of the NPPF expects plan-making authorities to set a target for the homes needed by the different groups referred to in that paragraph. In addition, the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states that *"An increase in the total housing figures included in the plan may need to be considered where it could help to deliver the required number of affordable homes."* This is acknowledged by the council and is quoted in paragraph 3.7 of the Housing Topic Paper. It is therefore surprising and concerning, given the very high level of affordable housing need stated in the SHMA, that no affordable housing target has been calculated by the council and no increase whatsoever has been proposed to even make a contribution towards addressing this significant level of need.
- 2.12 Paragraph 3.14 of the Housing Topic Paper (with identical text in the Interim Sustainability Appraisal) confirms that the SHMA does not identify an affordable housing target, stating the reason as: *"This is because the amount of affordable housing that can be delivered is limited by the amount that can be viably provided."* In paragraph 3.15, it is also stated that: *"In Test Valley Borough absolute affordable housing need is 120% of the standard method derived LHN (550 dpa) and this would lead to a housing requirement of 1222 dpa. The SHMA does not identify a demand for this level of market housing."* Whilst this may be the case, it simply does not comply with the expectations of paragraph 63 of the NPPF, nor with the PPG quoted above, which

expects a target to be set and a plan put in place to achieve this level of affordable housing delivery, which may well result in a higher overall housing target than would be the minimum LHN.

- 2.13 The council's argument that any increase in the overall housing target to address the level of affordable housing need would result in the Council failing to meet its own targets due to market limitations, is not in any way convincing, particularly as there is no market delivery evidence presented to test this point. No reasonable person would suggest an overall target of 1222 dpa (as quoted from paragraph 3.15 of the Housing Topic Paper), but the question remains unanswered as to what is the capacity of the market to absorb market homes, above 550 dpa, in order to meet more of the pressing affordable housing need? Any increase to the overall target (above 550 dpa), could make a significant positive contribution to addressing unmet need for affordable homes. Therefore, the approach proposed is not 'sound' as it is not consistent with national policy, nor is it evidence-based, as it simply assumes that the Test Valley housing markets cannot absorb any more than 550 dpa. This is clearly not the case as even cursory look at Test Valley's past housing delivery demonstrates.
- 2.14 Finally, we would remind the council that in para 3.35 of the Housing Topic Paper, it states that meeting need for affordable housing, including providing for needs by type and affordability across the Borough, is a **key issue** to emerge out of the previous round of consultation on the Local Plan. From what is seen in the current proposals, the council has not done sufficient to address the need for affordable homes and is not giving due consideration to its own Local Plan consultation responses.

Unmet Needs in Neighbouring Local Authorities

- 2.15 It is understood that, at this point in time, the issue of unmet housing needs of neighbouring Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) relates only to the southern Test Valley housing market area (HMA). Whilst no requests have yet been received from LPAs neighbouring the northern HMA, we would remind the council of the expectation to continue 'Duty to Cooperate' discussions with northern neighbours and to provide Statements of Common Ground with these LPAs, as is expected by the NPPF.
- 2.16 With regard to the southern Test Valley HMA, we note that the Duty to Cooperate Topic Paper acknowledges the publication (in December 2023) of the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH) Spatial Position Statement (SPS). Whilst not a statutory plan, the SPS is important as a key expression of joint planning (and Duty to Cooperate fulfilment) for South Hampshire. It is therefore, an agreed strategic planning approach, as is documented in the PfSH Statement of Common Ground, which has been signed by all member authorities, including Test Valley BC.
- 2.17 Table 1 of the SPS sets out the overall anticipated housing need and land supply position for the period 2023-2036. Overall this highlights that there is an acknowledged shortfall of 11,771 dwellings. The SPS goes further by setting out a strategic policy approach through which a portion of this unmet need can be addressed. This is found in Policy SPS8 (Strategic Principles for Broad Areas of Search for Growth). This outlines the evidence-based case (that was presented to the PfSH Joint Committee meeting on 6th Dec 2023) for a number of 'broad areas of search for growth'. These areas included "*East of Romsey*" and "*Southwest of Chandlers Ford*" within Test Valley Borough. Importantly, Policy SPS8 states that "*The suitability and deliverability of these areas will be considered in the relevant Local Plans.*"
- 2.18 The council's response to this is found in the Spatial Strategy Topic Paper, where it states (para 3.5) "*The SPS does not set out a need for Test Valley to pursue a housing requirement above LHN (derived from the standard method). Through the preparation of the local plan, the Council has considered reasonable alternative growth scenarios in accordance with the settlement*

hierarchy and also within the 'areas of search' identified in the SPS." Further responses are found in the Housing Topic Paper (in para 3.27), where it is argued that the level of unmet need identified in the SPS is: "based upon the amount of housing with is currently identified and thus there is some supply which is yet to be identified through local plans. There is not therefore yet a quantified unmet housing need, rather some housing need yet to be identified, which may or may not result in an unmet need in due course." And that: "We will continue to participate in the work of PfSH, however potential unmet need is a challenge, when we don't have certainty or evidence over whether there is unmet housing needs."

- 2.19 These responses are considered to be contrary to both Policy SPS8 of the PfSH SPS and contrary to national policy for a number of reasons. First, this is because the response fails to acknowledge the significant level of the shortfall. It is clear that the overall level of shortfall can and will change over time and nobody would expect Test Valley to accommodate the entire unmet need. However, the council's position does not acknowledge that a meaningful contribution could be made towards the unmet need. For example, a contribution amounting to 10% of the unmet need (approximately 1,200 dwellings) would make a real difference, but would not expose the council to delivering more than any future quantified level of unmet need that was established in local plans.
- 2.20 The second reason why the council's response to the SPS is insufficient is because it fails to recognise the agreed positive strategic approach designed to address the shortfall as set out in Policy SPS8. Test Valley BC has willingly signed up to the PfSH Statement of Common Ground, but has declined to make any positive move to implement the agreed strategic approach. The Draft Local Plan and supporting evidence show that the council has not seriously considered the potential contribution that could be made by the two 'broad areas of search for growth' located within Test Valley Borough. This is despite the Borough being in a much better position than many PfSH members to make a contribution, due to the relatively fewer constraints in Test Valley. We consider that the fact that the council proposes to make no contribution whatsoever is clearly not a 'sound' approach with regard to paragraphs 11 and 35 of the NPPF.
- 2.21 The final reason why the response to the SPS is insufficient is that the need to take account of cross-boundary issues and to consider any unmet housing need from neighbouring authorities emerged as a key issue from past local plan consultations. This included consultations on both the Refined Issues and Options stage and also the Regulation 18 (Stage 1) Local Plan (see paragraphs 3.35 and 3.36 of the Housing Topic Paper). We note in particular the request from Southampton City Council for the Test Valley Local Plan to test a higher amount of housing than the LHN through the Sustainability Appraisal (See Table 1 of the Duty to Cooperate Paper). We have seen no evidence that this has been done. Again, this leads us to conclude that the approach is not consistent with paragraphs 11 and 35 of the NPPF, nor with the agreed joint strategic approach set out in the SPS and PfSH Statement of Common Ground.

Conclusion on 'Meeting Our Housing Needs'

- 2.22 Overall, the above arguments lead us to conclude that the Local Plan must set a higher target than the minimum LHN in order to both meet more of the pressing need for affordable homes and also to make a contribution towards the unmet needs of neighbouring LPAs. We believe that a starting point for this additional level of provision should be in the order of at least 1,200 dwellings, split approximately evenly between the northern and southern HMAs. This increased target should be in addition to the 10% additional supply of homes that the Local Plan identifies for market flexibility and resilience purposes in Table 3.3 of the Local Plan.

Housing Supply

- 2.23 BDW commissioned specialist technical work to fully understand the council's housing land supply position that has been prepared by Emery Planning.
- 2.24 Table 3.3 of the Local Plan sets out the anticipated housing supply over the plan period, which for the Borough as a whole, amounts to 12,415 dwellings. However, having read this table alongside the Housing Trajectory (January 2024) document, Gillings Planning have a number of concerns that the council has overestimated its anticipated supply as follows:
- 2.25 The "*Existing Completions, Housing Commitments at Andover, Romsey and Tier 2 Settlements*" category in Table 3.3 includes a large number of sites which would be classed as "*Category b*)" sites with regard to the definition of '*Deliverable*' in the NPPF (page 69). These sites should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years. We are concerned that no evidence of this has been presented by the Council and so the number shown under this category, could well be significantly less than anticipated. The same concerns apply to the two categories in Table 3.3 called "*Existing Completions, Housing Commitments in Rural Area*" and "*Total Neighbourhood Plan Housing Requirements (as set out in Policy SS5)*". For both of these categories some anticipated supply is being shown in the Housing Trajectory, within the first five years, in the absence of any evidence to demonstrate that these will come forward as anticipated.
- 2.26 Emery Planning raise concerns with all five allocations in Northern Test Valley arguing that they are *not deliverable* and *should not be included within the 5YHLS*. *This is set out further in Section of 11 of this report.*
- 2.27 With regard to the "*Total Supply from Housing Allocations in Local Plan 2040*" category on Table 3.3, there are particular concerns about the delivery timescales of the two allocations to the East of Ludgershall. These concerns are covered in more detail in our comments on Chapter 4 of the Local Plan (see Section 3 below).
- 2.28 For the "*Total windfall allowance*" category, again there is no evidence to support the level of windfall allowance included in Table 3.3. The council will be aware that NPPF paragraph 72 requires plan-making authorities to provide "*compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends.*" In the absence of such evidence, the proposed windfall allowance cannot be relied upon.

Delivery, Contingency and Monitoring

- 2.29 **Policy 9 (SS9): Delivery, Monitoring and Contingency** is designed to provide confidence that the Local Plan will meet its targets and commitments and ultimately to provide for a trigger for an early review of the plan, if monitoring indicates this is required. However, as currently drafted, the Policy is weak and vague and does not perform the role intended.
- 2.30 In the first paragraph of the Policy, there is no sense of what measures will be taken if the Plan is found to not be delivering. The second paragraph does not provide any timescales for investigation or action to be taken and does not clearly state that one action could be to trigger an early review of the Local Plan.
- 2.31 We consider that Policy 9 (SS9) is ineffective at present and needs to be significantly revised, as indicated above.

3.0 Local Plan Chapter 4: Test Valley Communities

The Northern Test Valley Spatial Strategy

- 3.1 The first part of Chapter 4 sets out the strategy and site allocations within Northern Test Valley. We have a number of concerns about the strategy appraisal process that underpinned the site selection for Northern Test Valley. Whilst our concerns about the appraisal process and method are set out in Sections 6 and 7 below (which cover the Interim Sustainability Appraisal), we cover here our particular concerns about the proposed Ludgershall allocations.
- 3.2 The spatial strategy that underpins the site selection process has evolved over a long period of time including two public consultations and summary outcomes of these are set out in the Spatial Strategy Topic Paper. In relation to the Refined Issues and Options (2020), paragraph 5.7 of this Topic Paper explains that *“the hybrid approach was refined to focus growth in relation to the settlement hierarchy and particularly in Andover and Romsey. This hybrid approach also involves focusing growth in relation to economic centres and transport hubs in the main settlements.”*
- 3.3 This approach was taken forward to the Regulation 18 (Stage 1) Consultation (2022). Paragraph 5.14 of the Spatial Strategy Topic Paper states that *“there has been continued support for directing growth primarily to the main settlements in providing for local housing need (LHN) and in accordance with the settlement hierarchy.”* And *“A number of sites have been promoted at the main settlements capable of delivering LHN. On this basis, there is no compelling reason to direct larger scale strategic housing growth to the rural area.”*
- 3.4 Paragraph 4.13 of the Topic Paper also summarises the outcome of assessments of the emerging spatial strategy against the Draft Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) and states *“The vision and objectives of the draft LTP4 include reducing the need to travel and locating growth in areas well connected to public transport, services and amenities. This supports a primary focus for growth in the main settlements in the Borough including Andover and Romsey.”*
- 3.5 We support the thrust of this work on the emerging spatial strategy. Therefore, we are surprised and concerned that this latest version of the Local Plan breaks with the previous approach, that has been tested at public consultation and against evidence, and has proposed to allocate a significant amount of homes to the eastern periphery of Ludgershall in Wiltshire, where access to facilities and services is limited due to poor existing infrastructure and the location of employment is distant. This proposal is considered contrary to the clear acknowledgement in the Spatial Strategy Topic Paper (and the Interim SA) that there are sufficient sustainably located sites at Test Valley’s main settlements to accommodate the strategic scale development needs.

Ludgershall Site Allocations

- 3.6 Paragraph 6.9 of the Topic Paper refers to Ludgershall being a ‘Tier 2 Market Town’ in the Wiltshire Local Plan (2015 Core Strategy). However, that plan is now out-of-date and whilst Wiltshire Council appears to be proposing to retain Ludgershall within the same position of the hierarchy, that is a matter set out within a draft Local Plan only, that has not yet been subject to Examination. Given the peripheral locations of the Test Valley proposed allocations at Ludgershall, we remain unconvinced by the conclusion reported in paragraph 6.9 of the Topic Paper that *“there is good access to services, facilities, employment and public transport.”*

- 3.7 The key problem with the proposed allocations at the eastern end of Ludgershall is that residents there will be entirely dependent on significant future infrastructure improvements that are not located within Test Valley (or indeed Hampshire), meaning that Test Valley BC (and Hampshire County Council) have no control over their delivery and timescales. The proposed allocations are located at the extreme eastern end of the settlement, at least 1.5km distant from the 'local centre'. This local centre is itself limited in terms of the range of retail and other facilities available. However, the Andover Road (A342) connection from the sites is currently unattractive and unsafe for walking or cycling as it suffers from heavy traffic loads with only intermittent pedestrian and cycle facilities. Of greater concern is that the larger southern allocation site cannot even access the Andover Road until a vehicular bridge is constructed over the railway line. This is a major infrastructure project that could take several years in its own right.
- 3.8 Notwithstanding the lack of vehicular access to the southern allocation, the accessibility of both strategic allocations is based on the operation of single bus service (Active8) that routes between Andover and Salisbury (via Ludgershall and Tidworth). Whilst this is a generally frequent bus service, it is very limited on Sundays and Bank Holidays, meaning that the entire development will be forced into car dependency at those times. However, reliance on the single Active8 bus route is not sufficient to make these sites sustainable. In addition, other facilities such as healthcare and potentially education will need to be addressed before any significant development on the Test Valley side of the boundary can be built out. If this infrastructure planning and delivery does not happen as planned, the Test Valley sites will result in isolated and unsustainable development.
- 3.9 The Regulation 19 Wiltshire Local Plan includes its own strategic allocations at Ludgershall, including over 2,000 new homes south of Ludgershall at sites which are significantly better located than the Test Valley sites to take advantage of the existing 'local centre' which is proposed to be enhanced. The new proposed employment areas are located to the west of Ludgershall, but again these do not yet exist and there is no certainty on the timescales involved in delivering the employment. Wiltshire Council appears to have done limited planning on the delivery of the infrastructure required for their own sites and even less so for the further infrastructure required for the Test Valley sites.
- 3.10 In short, the Test Valley proposals at Ludgershall are not sustainable and are uncertain in their suitability and deliverability. Whilst the allocation sites may represent a long-term strategic aspiration, with which both Test Valley and Wiltshire are in agreement, the lack of any certainty on sustainability, accessibility and infrastructure provision makes the Test Valley proposals premature and not possible to be relied upon within the Local Plan. In addition development of the site has the potential to cause significant effects on the setting of the North Wessex AONB, which is adjacent to the site and this proposed site access requires further work with Wiltshire Council and Hampshire County Council regarding deliverability.
- 3.11 The Land East of Ludgershall site due to commence delivering in 2028/29, according to the Test Valley Housing Trajectory (January 2024) and Land SE of Ludgershall is scheduled to begin delivery in 2031/32. However, given the high level of uncertainty that the various infrastructure and accessibility issues will be possible to resolve as planned, we do not consider that these timescales are realistic and they are likely to slip by several years. Even if the timescales could be broadly met for the delivery of homes, there is a real danger of creating unsustainable and isolated developments that build in car dependency in the absence of the full range of infrastructure improvements required. This would serve to undermine the overall spatial strategy of the Local Plan.

North Andover Allocation- Manor Farm

- 3.12 The SHLAA Appendix 2 Part 1 (January 2024) states that the site may be constrained by land ownership, however no further details are provided or how this is to be overcome. Appendix IV of the Sustainability Appraisal, Housing Site Appraisals (February 2024) identifies several constraints associated with the development of the site, as follows:
- Potential access constraints.
 - The North Wessex AONB is to the north of the site. This is a landscape which is highly susceptible to change and there are no obvious natural parameters to accommodate future development within the existing landscape pattern.
 - Eastern area of the site lies within a Critical Local Gap. The indicative masterplan put forward by the developer would significantly reduce the settlement gap.
 - Cluster of listed buildings adjacent to the eastern boundary. Further assessment is required in relation to the potential impact.
 - Ancient Woodland to the north of the site and adjacent to Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). The development has the potential to result in adverse effects on protected sites.
- In addition, the Strategic Sites Viability Testing (January 2024) states that the site shows challenging viability when considered on a 'present value' basis, and that it may be necessary to consider the extent that the full suite of emerging Local Plan policies can be accommodated when individual planning applications are considered
- 3.13 In our view, which is supported by work undertaken by Emery Planning, it is essential that a more realistic assessment is undertaken of the deliverability of these allocations and the infrastructure they are dependent on. In order to ensure that the spatial strategy is not undermined by delays in the Ludgershall sites, additional smaller and medium-scales allocations should be made at Andover, where these could commence delivery in the early years of the plan, without being dependent on large expensive infrastructure improvements. Our client's site at Homestead Farm, Weyhill Road has already been assessed as a suitable and available site. Importantly, the allocation of this site for around 180 dwellings would be fully consistent with the Spatial Strategy. See the sections below for further details of how this site opportunity could be delivered.

4.0 Local Plan Chapter 5: Theme Based Policies

Local Gaps

- 4.1 The Local Gaps are proposed to be designated in the Local Plan by **Policy ENV4: Local Gaps**. This designation is supported by the definition of the Local Gaps on the Policies Map and this in turn is supported by an up-to-date evidence base in the form of the *Local Gaps Assessment* (Stephenson Halliday, December 2023).
- 4.2 We support the overall approach to using Local Gaps as a mechanism to prevent settlement coalescence across the Borough and we consider that the Council's evidence base for this policy area is robust. However, whilst we do not have any specific comments on the text of Policy ENV:4, we do have concerns that the council has not taken proper account of the recommendations within its own evidence report in relation to the Andover – Weyhill – Pentons Local Gap.
- 4.3 Whilst further detail is provided in Section 5 below (dealing with the Policies Map), our concern is that the Local Gaps Assessment provided a clear recommendation in relation to the amending the definition of the Andover – Weyhill – Pentons Local Gap, that the council appears to have ignored. This recommendation relates to the removal from the gap of the areas to the south of the 'The Harroway' ridgeline due to the degradation in the function of the gap in this area that has occurred over the past number of years. The council's evidence base is very clear that the area to the south of the 'Harroway' (which would include our client's site at Homestead Farm, Weyhill Road) no longer serves any purposeful function as local gap and should be removed from the designation.

Health, Wellbeing and Recreation

- 4.4 **Policy HE3: Access to the Countryside** states that the council will support development that provides opportunities to increase public access to the countryside, subject to two criteria included within the policy. We fully support this approach which is embedded within the design work that BDW has undertaken on the proposals for residential development at Homestead Farm, Weyhill Road. As we have set out in further detail in Section 12 below and within the 'Vision Document' which accompanies these representations, the proposed scheme of around 180 homes will be designed to improve access to the 'Harroway' Public Right of Way, integrating routes from Weyhill Road through the development to the ridgeline and wider countryside and safeguarding the character and amenity of the existing Right of Way.

Self-build and Custom Build Housing

- 4.5 **Policy HOU7: Self-Build and Custom Build Housing** requires at least 5% serviced plots for sale to self and custom builders on sites of 100 or more dwellings. Whilst we support the overall thrust to boost the supply of self and custom build homes, we are concerned that the 100 dwelling threshold is arbitrary and is not based on any robust viability evidence to assess the impact of this requirement on residential schemes.
- 4.6 Where serviced plots need to be marketed for an extensive period (24 months is referred to in the policy) it can have significant viability impacts. For example, if the remainder of the site is completed before the marketing period expires, there is the prospect of the house builder needing to bring construction crews back onto the site, at a later date, to build out the serviced plots, if they have not been taken up as self-build homes. In addition to the cost implications of

this inefficient construction approach, it would cause considerable disturbance and inconvenience to new residents at the site and surrounding area.

- 4.7 This requirement should be appropriately assessed within viability evidence and the policy requirement should be subject to overall scheme viability, with a mechanism to reduce the level of serviced plot provision where evidence of viability constraints can be demonstrated. Further, in order to avoid the specific issues referred to above, any required marketing period for serviced plots to be provided should not extend beyond the final construction completion of the remainder of the development site.

5.0 Local Plan: Policies Map

Settlement Boundary Review

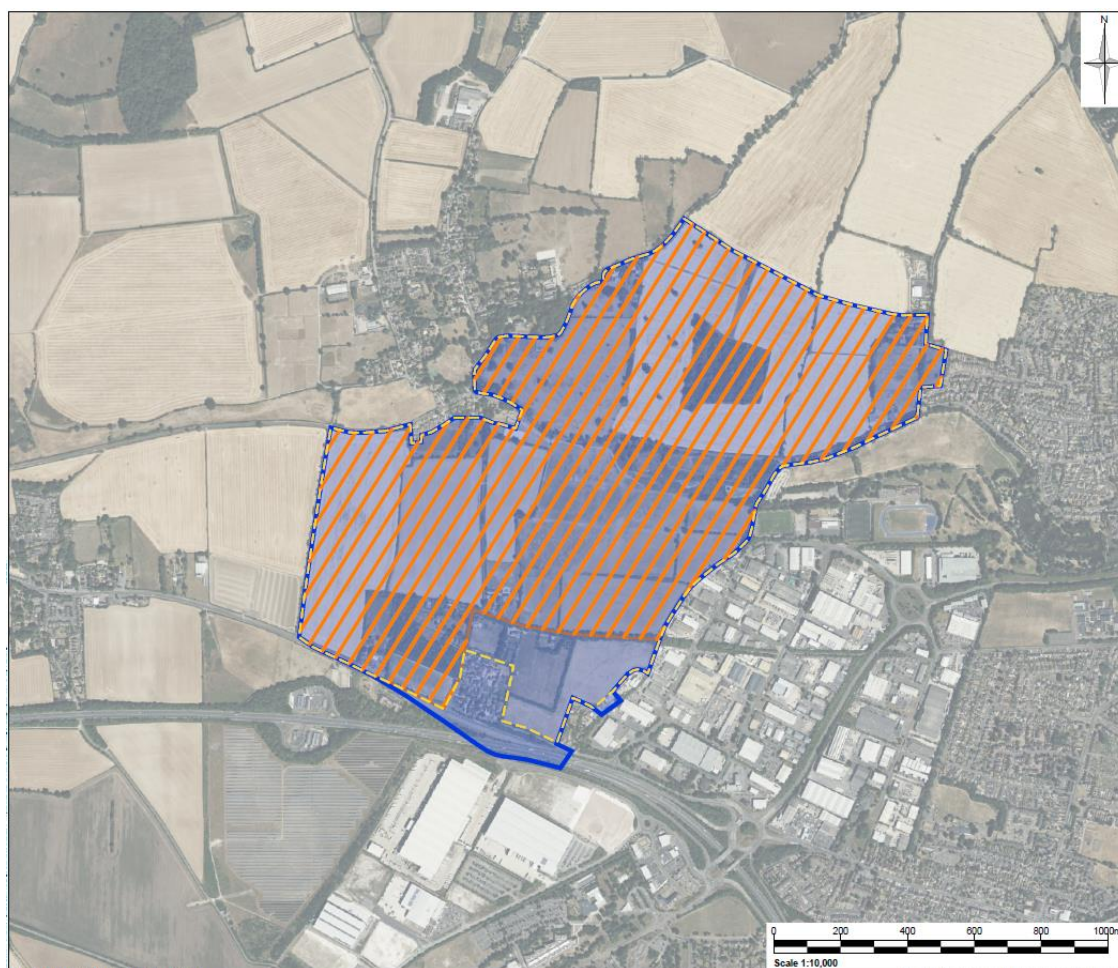
- 5.1 The council's *Settlement Boundary Review* sets out a number of proposed changes to the settlement boundaries and these are detailed in Appendix 1 of the council's evidence document.
- 5.2 For Andover and Charlton, a change is proposed at *Land adjoining Portway Business Park* (referenced in Appendix 1 as 'Map Area 7'). We fully support the inclusion of this identified land within the settlement boundary of Andover.

Definition of the 'Andover – Weyhill – Pentons' Local Gap

- 5.3 Within our comments on Policy ENV4: Local Gaps, we expressed concern that the council has not taken appropriate account of the recommendation within its own **Local Gaps Assessment** (LGA) to make changes to the 'Andover – Weyhill – Pentons' Local Gap. In support of these comments, BDW has provided specialist Landscape and Visual Impact technical evidence that has been prepared by SLR Consulting and which is appended to these representations as Appendices 1 and 2. This builds on SLR's earlier Landscape and Visual Appraisal of the Homestead Farm site that is also included below as Appendix 3.
- 5.4 In summary, SLR agrees with the evidence presented in the LGA and, within the Technical Note provided below in Appendix 1, SLR highlights the importance that the LGA places on the function of the 'The Harroway' which is described as a visually prominent ridgeline.
- 5.5 The 'Recommendations' within the LGA (page 39) acknowledge that "*Vegetation structure within the existing gap contributes to the sense of separation between Andover, Weyhill and The Pentons, particularly noting the transition from the modern edge of Andover to the historic, smaller scale settlements of Penton Grafton and Penton Mewsey.*"
- 5.6 The LGA recommendations continue: "*Existing built form within this gap has degraded the function of the Local Gap in the southeast, although the ridgeline to the north of this, on which the ancient vegetated holloway 'The Harroway' is located, is also critical in defining a sense of separation, physically and visually*".
- 5.7 Importantly, the LGA recommendation concludes: "***Consideration could therefore be given to amending the Local Gap boundary in the southeast of this gap, to the south of and below the ridgeline on which 'The Harroway' is located***" (our emphasis added).
- 5.8 This recommendation is entirely supported by the conclusions of Stephenson Halliday in the council's **Landscape Sensitivity Study** (LSS) prepared in January 2024. SLR have appraised this evidence and further detail of that can be found under Section 9 below. However, in summary, Annex 1 of the LSS assessed the landscape sensitivity of a parcel at the western edge of the West Portway Industrial Area to the west of Andover, which forms a large part of the Andover - Weyhill - Pentons Local Gap and is bordered by Foxcotte Lane to the north and the A342 and A303 to the south.
- 5.9 In relation to visual characteristics and intervisibility of this area, the LSS notes that "*The southern parcel (south of the PRoW) is visually contained by the large industrial development to the east, the tree belts along the A303 corridor and along the northern boundary, and susceptibility is therefore lower in visual terms*" (para 1.1.172). The overall landscape susceptibility to change for the southern parcels (within which our client's site is located) was

described by the LSS as **Moderate** “with susceptibility reduced by the urbanising influences” (para 1.1.174).

- 5.10 The overall landscape sensitivity for the southern parcels is, similarly, described by the LSS as **Moderate** due to their “eroded character and urban fringe influences, although as noted above the ridgeline associated with ‘The Harroway’ marks an important break in landscape character and sensitivity, with only the land south of the ridgeline, influenced by the industrial estate, falling within the moderate sensitivity category” (para 1.1.176).
- 5.11 The LSS assessment of these land parcels concludes with the recommendation “Seek to contain the bulk of any new development within the southern parcel, in proximity to the existing settlement edge and contained by the robust vegetation structure along ‘The Harroway’ (PRoW) that would form a defensible edge and screen built form, as well as maintaining the character and sense of separation associated with the existing Local Gap” (para 1.1.177).
- 5.12 This recommendation aligns with the conclusion of SLR’s *Preliminary Landscape and Visual Opinion* (August 2023) which is found in Appendix 3 below and also agrees with the council’s own Local Gaps Assessment that was discussed above.
- 5.13 We note that the Local Gap boundary included on the emerging Policies Map (*Inset Map 1 – Andover – Charlton*) already includes a potential amendment to the definition of the Local Gap. However, on the basis of the clear recommendations set out in the council’s LGA, in addition to evidence within the council’s LSS, we strongly believe that further changes to the Andover – Weyhill - Pentons Local Gap area required. To that end and to be helpful for the council, we have provided a plan below (and included within Appendix 2) which has been prepared by SLR. This plan illustrates the adopted Local Gap boundary, as well as the council’s current proposed amendment and also a further amendment that we have proposed to the Local Gap boundary, based on the LGA and LSS evidence work that was discussed above.



Legend:




-  TEST VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL: LOCAL GAPS ASSESSMENT - ANDOVER - WEYHILL- THE PENTONS LOCAL GAP (DECEMBER 2023)
-  DRAFT TEST VALLEY LOCAL PLAN 2040 - ANDOVER - THE PENTONS LOCAL GAP (FEBRUARY 2024)
-  PROPOSED THE PENTONS LOCAL GAP EXTENTS

Figure 2: Andover-Weyhill-Pentons Local Gap Boundaries Plan: SLR March 2024

- 5.14 The boundary we have proposed (shown in orange hatching above) aligns with the council's own landscape evidence base in identifying 'The Harroway' as a strong and defensible boundary to the south. The plan also indicates that the area of land south of 'The Harroway', which incorporates the existing Penton Corner settlement as well as our client's site, should be removed from the definition of the Local Gap on the council's Policies Map.
- 5.15 It is important to note that our proposed boundary does not decrease the physical size of the gap between Andover and Penton Grafton and Penton Mewsey, nor does it decrease the perceptual gap or the sense of a clear open separation between these settlements. In that way, our proposed changes protect and retain the integrity and function of the Local Gap and are consistent with the council's own evidence base.

Additional Site Allocation: Land at Homestead Farm, Weyhill Road, Andover

- 5.16 On the basis of the changes to the Local Gap boundary that we believe are necessary, as well as in light of the pressing need for an increase to the target number of homes required in the Local Plan (as we have argued in Sections 2 and 3 above), we consider that the Policies Map should also be amended to show our client's site at Homestead Farm, Weyhill Road as an allocated site for the delivery of around 180 dwellings.
- 5.17 Land at Homestead Farm has already been assessed as a suitable and available site through the council's spatial strategy and site selection process (within the Interim Sustainability Appraisal) and the allocation of this site would be fully consistent with the emerging spatial strategy. However, we have now demonstrated above that the council's own landscape and local gap evidence work supports the potential for the site to be removed from the Local Gap designation, and accepts that the site can perform a beneficial function in meeting the need for homes at Andover, as Northern Test Valley's key sustainable settlement.
- 5.18 Whilst the council may point to the Interim Sustainability Appraisal in highlighting that 'Land at Penton Corner' was not amongst the preferred sites taken forward for allocation in the Local Plan, we believe that this conclusion is flawed as it was misguided as to the landscape and visual impacts that would result from the allocation of the Penton Corner site. Had the authors of the Interim Sustainability Appraisal taken appropriate account of the council's own landscape and local gap evidence base, we consider that a different conclusion would have been reached. This is concerning to us as this is likely to have had an impact on the overall assessment outcomes of the four 'growth scenarios' that were appraised within the Interim Sustainability Appraisal. As we set out in Sections 6 and 7 below, we consider that the flaws in the sustainability appraisal process mean that this work should be undertaken again, this time taking proper account of the relevant evidence base and considering what consequential changes are required for the next stage of the Local Plan preparation.

6.0 Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report

Defining Growth Scenarios

- 6.1 Section 5 of the Interim Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) seeks to define the various growth scenarios to be tested, using both ‘top down’ and ‘bottom up’ factors. Whilst much of this approach is reasonable and straightforward, we are concerned that significant flaws in some aspects of the appraisal process has resulted in unreliable and unjustified assessment outcomes, which have impacted the definition of the growth scenarios. We provide further detail on our specific concerns below in relation to the Growth Scenarios Appraisal section of the ISA. However, in relation to the definition of the growth scenarios, we highlight that the identification of ‘*sequentially preferable*’ sites that were held ‘constant’ through the appraisal process (paras 5.122 and 5.123) should have included Penton Corner.
- 6.2 It is clear to us that the exclusion of Penton Corner from the ‘*sequentially preferable*’ sites was based on a flawed and misguided understanding of the adverse impacts that allocating land at Penton Corner would have on landscape and the Local Gap. Given the clear strategic advantages of this site and the benefits it would provide, we believe that a more objective appraisal, taking account of the up-to-date landscape and local gap evidence would have included Penton Corner as a ‘*sequentially preferable*’ site, based on the criteria set out in paragraph 5.123 as follows:
1. It is sustainably located adjacent to the Tier 1 settlement of Andover;
 2. It is well connected to key services, facilities and public transport;
 3. It avoids significant adverse effects on landscape, designated local gaps* and ecology; and
 4. It has been appraised through transport modelling and are considered deliverable at this stage.
- *We have shown in Section 5 above and also below that this is the case when proper account is taken of the council’s evidence recommendations.*
- 6.3 Consequently, we do not agree that “*Penton Corner is least sequentially preferential due to impact on integrity of local gap, impact on residential amenity of adjoining business park, site access constraints and surface water flooding. These constraints also affect site capacity*” (para 5.133). We have referred to the reasons why we disagree with this assertion in Section 5 above and also below. With regard to site capacity, we have provided evidence within a Vision Document for the proposal (included in Appendix 4) to demonstrate that the site is capable of delivering around 180 dwellings in a sustainable way that ensures that development can be fully compliant with emerging development management policies in the Local Plan.

Growth Scenarios Appraisal

- 6.4 The outcomes for the assessment of the four growth scenarios is included in Table 10 and paragraphs 6.92 – 6.97. However, the preference for ‘Scenario 1’ cannot be relied upon due to the significant flaws and inconsistencies identified in the SA assessment process which has resulted in a skewed and unreliable assessment. In particular, we disagree that “*The inclusion of the Penton Corner site in Scenario 4 has a significant adverse impact on landscape and the local gap*” (para 6.97). This assertion is not consistent with council’s own evidence base. The assessment that has resulted in this conclusion is therefore flawed and must be re-run based on a proper taking account of the up-to-date evidence.

- 6.5 Under the heading '**Accessibility**' (paras 6.99 – 6.105) the assessment of Growth Scenarios 1 and 2 fails to recognise that accessibility at the Ludgershall allocations depends on significant transport infrastructure upgrades, within a different Highway Authority, that cannot be controlled by the council. Until upgrades to the pedestrian and cycle infrastructure are achieved, sustainable access for the two Ludgershall sites is dependent on a single bus service, with limited Sunday and Bank Holiday services. In these circumstances, it is inappropriate to take future and uncertain infrastructure improvements into account for the assessment of Growth Scenarios 1 and 2, as stated in para 6.104.
- 6.6 Accessibility to education is an issue where there is a clear significant negative effect for Scenarios 1 and 2. This is because whilst the Ludgershall proposals may come with a new primary school, there is no certainty on timing and on the planning for secondary and tertiary education. Again, this may be dependent on upgraded infrastructure within a different Education Authority. This uncertain position at Ludgershall compares very unfavourably with the position of sites located at edge of Andover, where school places can be provided with shorter travel distances and with much greater certainty of timescales. None of these points have been adequately assessed in appraisal process.
- 6.7 Under the heading '**Transport emissions**' it is stated that *“all the growth scenarios help to reduce car dependency and provide the opportunity to support walking and cycling and a degree of local trip internalisation / self – dependency”* (para 6.127). However, we do not consider this to be the case for the Ludgershall proposals, which are entirely dependent on significant strategic transport infrastructure improvements to allow any realistic possibility of making walking and cycling safe and attractive modes of travel. This should be recognised in the assessment as should the current inadequacy of Ludgershall 'local centre', which simply has too few services and facilities to make it an attractive destination. Whilst there are proposals to improve the centre, these are not in the council's control and are uncertain in timescale.
- 6.8 Paragraph 6.127 continues *“However, Test Valley is a rural Borough where future bus service provision is uncertain and some car use will be a necessity.”* This acknowledges that it is unwise to rely on a single bus service to avoid rendering the Ludgershall proposed allocations unsustainable and isolated rural development which will build in car-dependency.
- 6.9 Under the heading '**Housing**' paragraph 6.148 states *“Growth scenarios 1 – 2 can provide for LHN and a supply buffer of between (10% and 9% respectively). Growth scenarios 3 – 4 can provide for LHN and a supply buffer of (9% and 8% respectively).”* However, we consider that this assessment is arbitrary and contrived as the council has chosen the mix of sites for each growth scenario and so it is spurious to then seek to assess these arbitrary choices. Concluding that Growth Scenarios 1 and 2 perform better than 3 and 4 simply reflects the mix of sites that the Council has chosen to include in each scenario. This flawed approach contributes towards a skewed outcome to the assessment of the Growth Scenarios overall (as shown in Table 10).
- 6.10 Paragraph 6.149 states *“In terms of housing delivery and timing, the phasing of strategic sites across the growth scenarios would provide for LHN within the plan period. Growth scenarios 2, 3 and 4 may perform marginally better as they include smaller sites with shorter lead in times for delivery.”* We consider that the assessment outcome for 'housing' does not take into account the significant uncertainties in relation to infrastructure delivery for the Ludgershall sites (e.g. transport, education and the local centre enhancements) which are dependent on actions by Wiltshire Council. At the very least, this will lead to much longer lead-in times for these sites than the Council has allowed for in the Housing Trajectory document. It is therefore not considered robust or accurate to assess Scenarios 1 and 2 as preferable to 3 and 4.
- 6.11 Under the heading '**Landscape**' paragraph 6.154 states *“of the variable sites Penton Corner is within a local gap and area of high landscape sensitivity and development of the site is likely to*

result in significant effects.” As referred to above, this statement is highly inaccurate and misleading and is entirely inconsistent with the council’s own Landscape Sensitivity and Local Gap evidence. This has contributed to an inaccurate assessment outcome for Growth Scenario 4 which should be revised in accordance with the evidence.

- 6.12 Paragraph 6.156 states “*Land East of Ludgershall is located adjacent to the North Wessex Downs AONB where there is potential for significant adverse impacts on the setting of the AONB. However, the site also has a close relationship to urbanising influences along the A342 road corridor which reduces susceptibility to change.*” Paragraph 6.157 also states that “*Land south of the A342 located to the south of Ludgershall is within an open and visually prominent area which elevates its susceptibility to change. Appropriate site layout (locating development within less sensitive areas), design and landscaping will be important to avoid significant effects.*” However, we believe that the location of the site known as ‘East of Ludgershall’ and its potential adverse impact on an adjacent nationally designated landscape has been inexplicably and unjustifiably ignored by the sustainability appraisal. This is despite the clear acknowledgement that there is potential for significant adverse landscape and visual impacts.
- 6.13 This assessment contrasts starkly with the assessment of a ‘*significant adverse landscape impact*’ concluded for Growth Scenario 4 due to the inclusion of Penton Corner. For example, paragraph 6.158 states that “*subject to the alignment of the growth scenarios with the recommendations of the landscape study (in terms of the location, design of development and landscaping strategy) neutral effects are predicted. However, Penton Corner as one of the variable site options is likely to result in significant adverse effects* (our emphasis).” This assertion (within the last sentence) is wholly unjustified. Unlike Land East of Ludgershall, Penton Corner is not located anywhere near a nationally designated landscape and, as with the assessment for Land East of Ludgershall, the council’s own evidence base stresses that the urban influences and A342 have significantly degraded the landscape character and degree of openness of the Penton Corner site, south of the ‘Harroway’ ridgeline.
- 6.14 We are concerned at the inconsistent approach taken by the sustainability appraisal process with regards to the landscape assessment of the Ludgershall sites and Penton Corner. We have to question why are the adverse impacts of the preferred Growth Scenario sites ignored on the basis that they can implement the recommendations of the Landscape Sensitivity Study. It is clear that for Growth Scenario 4 (and in particular Penton Corner) no such allowance is made, despite clear recommendations on how development here can be taken forward at that site without any significant impact on the landscape. This also ignores the clear recommendation in the Local Gap Assessment that it is appropriate to remove the Penton Corner site (south of ‘The Harroway’) from the Local Gap, as it does not contribute to the objectives of that local designation.
- 6.15 This appears to us to be simply a case of seeking to justify a pre-determined decision by the council to prefer Growth Scenario 1. We believe that this results in a skewed overall assessment outcome and represents a serious failure in the duty of the Council to objectively assess the sustainability of the different Growth Scenarios. We urge the council to reassess the scenarios on a fair and consistent basis.

Preferred Growth Scenarios

- 6.16 Section 7 of the ISA sets out the Preferred Growth Scenario. However, it is our firm view that the preference for Growth Scenario 1 cannot be relied upon due to the significant flaws and inconsistencies identified in the sustainability appraisal process which has resulted in a skewed and unreliable assessment. The assessment must be redone taking account of the council’s own evidence and the concerns we have highlighted above.

7.0 Sustainability Appraisal Appendix IV: Housing Site Appraisals

Homestead Farm, Weyhill Road, Andover (Site 281)

- 7.1 We have a number of concerns about how Land at Homestead Farm, Weyhill Road (site 281) has been assessed in the Interim Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) as set out in *Appendix IV: Housing Site Appraisals*. We have set out these concerns below under the relevant Sustainability Objectives in each case.

Objective 3: Maintain and improve access to services, facilities, and other infrastructure, whilst improving the efficiency and integration of transport networks and the availability and utilisation of sustainable modes of travel

- 7.2 We consider that there is an insufficient basis to conclude that there is a 'negative effect' under question "*I) Is the site able to connect to the highway?*" Transport consultants have assessed the site on behalf of our client and have concluded that there is a safe and appropriate access arrangement possible from Weyhill Road into the site. In addition, there is the potential to deliver a secondary access, via the adjacent business park service road. Please see the Vision Document provided (Appendix 4) for further details of the site access proposals.

Objective 4: Encourage the efficient use of land and conserve soil resources

- 7.3 Against the question "*A) Is the site on previously developed land?*" the site has been assessed as "*negative (The site is not previously developed land)*". However, this is not factually correct as the areas within the south east of the site are both previously developed and are located within the settlement boundary of Andover. Therefore, the assessment is incorrect and should be "*mixed performance*", i.e. "*The site includes some previously developed land (less than half)*".
- 7.4 Against the question "*B) Will development result in the loss of best or most versatile agricultural land?*", the site has been assessed as "*strongly negative*", i.e. "*All of the site is best and most versatile agricultural land as defined by NPPF; or the majority of the site is grade 1 and / or 2 agricultural land*". This is not correct as part of the site is previously developed land and so the assessment should be "*negative. The majority of the site is best and most versatile agricultural land as defined by NPPF*".

Objective 8: Conserve and, where possible, enhance the Borough's landscape, townscapes and settlement character

- 7.5 Our comments on the assessment of the site against this objective have been prepared by SLR within their *Technical Memorandum on Visual and Landscape issues* (March 2024) which can be found at Appendix 1.
- 7.6 Against the question "*A) Would development affect landscape character and protected landscapes?*" the site scores "*negative*" and "*Site is likely to have a negative effect on the landscape character. The site may be more sensitive to development in terms of landscape impact*". In the commentary it is noted that the site is described as "*A small, but highly sloping parcel of land immediately to the east of the conservation area, with fine trees and highly constrained for development – highly sensitive*". This is incorrect. The site is located approximately 600m south-east of the Conservation Area at Penton Mewsey and beyond 'The Harroway' ridgeline. The site slopes from approximately 85m AOD to approximately 80m AOD.

The site comprises rough grassland and ruderal vegetation enclosed by strong hedge lines with some trees along its boundaries. The character of the site is also influenced by the industrial development to the east and noise from nearby A-roads.

- 7.7 Against the question “B) Does the site relate well to the existing settlement and to the immediate context/surrounding area?”, the site is assessed as “negative” and “Is unlikely to relate positively to the existing settlement and/or the settlement edge and/or the immediate surroundings and context” and the assessment notes “Development along the eastern site boundary is within the settlement boundary. However, the majority of the site to the west is greenfield land outside the settlement boundary of Andover and Penton Corner. A development of this scale is not an appropriate extension to Penton Corner or located adjacent to a strategic business park”. However, the site sits between existing residential development to the west and existing industrial development to the east and is on the settlement edge, being partially located within the settlement boundary of Andover. It, therefore, sits within a small break between areas of existing settlement and therefore a sensitively designed development is appropriate in a landscape that is already influenced by built form, as has been advised by the council’s own landscape evidence.
- 7.8 Against the question “C) Does the site have the potential to impact the distinction between settlements, or lead to a risk of physical or visual coalescence, where this is relevant to settlement identity?” the assessment is similarly “negative - The site would result in a reduction in the distinction / separation of settlements through a degree of visual and / or physical coalescence”. The assessment notes that “The site falls within a local gap area and raises significant issues in respect of settlement distinction, coalescence and the merging of the hamlet of Penton Corner with Andover”. However, it is important to note that this is an incorrect interpretation of the purpose of the Andover – Weyhill – Penton Local Gap. The council’s Local Gaps Assessment describes the gap as “located to the west of Andover, between Andover to the south-east and Penton Grafton / Penton Mewsey to the north-west” rather than the gap between Andover and the small hamlet of Penton Corner. Further, the Local Gap Assessment, in considering the role of the site within a correct interpretation of the Local Gap concluded that the degree of degradation in openness and character that has occurred undermines the role of this parcel within the Local Gap and that it can be removed from the gap.
- 7.9 A high-level gap assessment was undertaken as part of the *Preliminary Landscape and Visual Opinion* previously prepared by SLR (August 2023) which is provided in Appendix 3. This concluded that “The main intention of the Gap Policy is to separate Andover from the historic settlements of Penton Grafton / Mewsey and in so doing protect sensitive open landscapes. Given the enclosed nature of the site it would be possible to develop this site, without increasing the intervisibility of settlement edges. The site is enclosed by residential development to the west, industrial development to the east and the A303 to the south. It does not extend as far north as existing built form. The gap between settlements would not, therefore, be compromised by the release of the site for development”.
- 7.10 Taking account of the evidence prepared for our client by SLR, we would argue with the ‘negative’ scoring against each of these elements as described above. It is also noted that this scoring is incongruous with the council’s latest evidence including the Local Gaps Assessment and the Landscape Sensitivity Study (Annex 1).

Objective 9: Conserve and, where possible, enhance the historic environment and the significance of heritage assets

- 7.11 A “negative” effect has been concluded against the question “A) Is development likely to conserve or enhance the significance of heritage assets, their setting, and the wider historic environment?” with the comment “The site is not within a Conservation Area but consideration will need to be given to possible impacts on the setting of Penton Grafton Conservation Area.”

However, as the SLR landscaping and visual impact evidence demonstrates, the site is distant from the Conservation Area (it is a minimum distance of over 600 metres). Further, due to the existing landscaping screening function of the intervening fields and 'The Harroway' ridgeline, any intervisibility is considered unlikely. It is therefore incorrect to conclude that a 'negative' effect against this criterion of SA Objective 9 should apply.

Objective 10: Conserve and, where possible, enhance biodiversity and habitat connectivity

- 7.12 A “negative” effect has been concluded against the question “D) Would development affect protected and unprotected trees?” with the comment “There are no TPOs within the site. There are unprotected trees lining the site boundary. If this site were to be brought forward in isolation this may be achieved without tree loss. However, if adjoining land parcels were brought forward this would likely involve the loss of trees. A tree survey would assist in determining the value of trees on site and the impact of development.”
- 7.13 We consider that there is no basis on which to conclude a ‘negative’ effect for this site as it should be assessed on its own merits, as promoted in the SHELAA. Evidence we have provided to the council previously (and again within the Vision Document found in Appendix 4) has demonstrated how the site can come forward without any harm to trees on the site. If the council considers that further information in the form of a tree survey is required, the assessment should have concluded “?- Insufficient information available”.

Objective 11: Support the delivery of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures

- 7.14 The site has been assessed as “negative” against this objective, (i.e. “For the criteria relating to objectives 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, the site performed negatively in the majority of cases”). However, taking into account the various errors and incorrect assessments we have highlighted above, this verdict to Objective 11 is no longer considered to be accurate and the correct assessment should be “mixed performance - site performed positively in relation to at least 50% of the criteria, or the majority attained a mixed performance on objectives 3, 4, 5, 6, 10”.

Commentary / Summary

- 7.15 The summary assessment text includes the comment: “The site is an area of high landscape sensitivity and falls within a designated local gap raising significant issues in respect of settlement distinction, coalescence and the merging of the hamlet of Penton Corner with Andover.” However, any objective reading of the council’s own Landscape Sensitivity Study and the Local Gap Study would demonstrate that’s this comment is wholly inaccurate and is not evidence-based. The landscape sensitivity and susceptibility is ‘moderate’ at most and, whilst the site is within the existing Local Gap as currently defined, the council’s evidence shows that the site plays no beneficial role in the achievement of the Local Gap’s objectives and it would be appropriate to remove the site from the Local Gap designation. The council’s evidence, supported by the landscape evidence that has been prepared by SLR, demonstrates that developing the site will not lead to any “settlement distinction, coalescence and the merging of the hamlet of Penton Corner with Andover” and it is disingenuous to conclude otherwise in the Sustainability Appraisal.

8.0 SHELAA (2024) Appendix 2: Northern Test Valley Housing and Mixed Use Sites

Homestead Farm, Weyhill Road, Andover (Site 281)

- 8.1 We have a number of comments on the SHELAA assessment of the site (Site 281) within *Appendix 2: Northern Test Valley Housing and Mixed Use Sites* (January 2024) and we would be obliged if these points could be corrected for the next version of the SHELAA.
- 8.2 **The map** for Site 281 is not the same as the land area that our client is promoting. The key difference is that the site being promoted does not include the industrial/employment uses seen at the eastern edge of the site in the SHELAA map, as shown on Figure 1 within Section 1 above. We understand that the industrial/employment area within the map shown in the SHELAA may become available in the future, but is not currently part of the proposals.
- 8.3 **The area** of the site as shown within Figure 1 above is 6.54 hectares. This is larger than the 4.65 hectares referred to in the SHELAA assessment.
- 8.4 With regard to the **constraints** listed in the assessment, the promoted site is unlikely to include any significant contamination or other pollution, subject to detailed site assessment of these factors.
- 8.5 In terms of the **site's capacity**, our recent technical work has resulted in a reduction from the original estimated capacity of 210, to a figure of about 180 dwellings. The main reasons for this reduction are: the need to avoid adverse impacts on site's archaeology; the need to take into account the site's surface water drainage; and the need to ensure that the site's landscaped boundaries are protected with appropriate buffers to the developed parts of the site.
- 8.6 Finally, with regard to **deliverability**, BDW consider that the site is available now and that the following build-out trajectory is realistic.

Year		Number of homes completed	Cumulative Completions
1	2025/6	0	0
2	2026/27	30	30
3	2027/28	50	80
4	2028/29	50	130
5	2029/30	50	180
6	2030/31	0	0

9.0 Evidence: Landscape Sensitivity Study (Annexe 1 – Residential Site Assessments)

Land at Harrow Way House, Land at Homestead Farm, Land at Croft House, Land at Short Lane, Penton Corner

- 9.1 Our comments on the *Landscape Sensitivity Study* (LSS) have been prepared by SLR and can be found in the *Technical Memorandum on Landscape and Visual issues* (March 2024) included in Appendix 1.
- 9.2 Under designated landscape interests (paragraph 1.1.160), the assessment notes Penton Grafton Conservation Area. Whilst the overall assessment parcel extends towards the Conservation Area, the site is contained entirely to the south of the Harroway and has very limited intervisibility with the Conservation Area as a result of landform and intervening vegetation.
- 9.3 The landscape value of the overall assessment parcel is described as ‘Local’, noting rural qualities, some long views but with, otherwise, a high degree of enclosure. As noted in the LSS Part One, guidance produced by the Landscape Institute, (TGN/02/21) describes a best practice methodology for assessing landscape value in undesignated landscapes. This includes consideration of Natural Heritage; Cultural Heritage; Landscape Condition; Associations; Distinctiveness; Recreational; Perceptual (Scenic); Perceptual (Wildness and Tranquillity) and Functionality. The assessment of landscape value included within the LSS Annexe 1 does not provide a detailed consideration of the assessment parcel against these criteria, nor does it deal with the level of landscape change and restoration/enhancement potential and opportunity that are identified as an important factor in the methodology set out in the LSS Part One. The conclusion of a ‘Local’ level of value is not, therefore, evidenced appropriately.
- 9.4 The description of a ‘Local’ level of value provided in the LSS Part One is as follows: “*May contain notable concentration of locally rare landscape types/examples of district importance, which may be recognised through local designation, or have moderate degree of representativeness of wider landscape character, and or contain a moderate concentration of positive key landscape characteristics identified in the LCA. May include assets of local importance, e.g. a locally listed landscape or may include locally designated nature conservation interests. May have featured in artistic or written works of local importance. The landscape may have a moderate/low degree of intactness or potentially a high degree of landscape fragmentation and associated low degree of functionality in terms of living systems, natural resources and natural capital assets. It may therefore have notable potential for restoration and enhancement with regard to green or blue infrastructure, nature pathways and ecological networks, and/or exhibit considerable restoration and enhancement opportunities*”
- 9.5 However, the description of the Assessment Parcel’s in relation to value does not identify the characteristics noted within the description of ‘Local’ value above. It aligns more closely with the description of ‘Neighbourhood (Community level)’ value. This would accord with the assessment of value undertaken within the Preliminary Landscape and Visual Opinion that was set out in SLR’s *Preliminary Landscape and Visual Guidance for a Potential Residential Development* (August 2023) and provided in Appendix 3.
- 9.6 Paragraph 1.1.163 notes that “*While the parcel cluster generally has a high degree of enclosure, its location at the edge of Andover brings notable urban influences in places, such as haphazard infill development, telephone masts and cables, industrial units, roads, the*

railway line and influences from rear gardens of residential properties". We welcome this description, which aligns with our own description of landscape character assessed in the SLR Preliminary Landscape and Visual Opinion.

- 9.7 In its assessment of Landscape Susceptibility, LSS Annexe 1 notes the *"peri urban greenfield land appearance, character and quality"* and describes the Harroway which *"bisects the two parcels marks an important separation point between this character and the historic landscape associated with Penton Park and its setting on the northern side of the ridge"*. It goes further to say that *"Sense of tranquillity and remoteness is locally eroded due to the urban influences at the edge of Andover which reduces susceptibility in perceptual and experiential terms"* and *"The southern parcels [within which the site is located] in the cluster are markedly influenced by large scale, modern development, notably the large industrial estate to the east and the busy A303 road corridor immediately south. Small, 20th century residential gardens and associated vegetated boundaries define the settlement interface to the west"*. In relation to visual characteristics and intervisibility the assessment notes that *"The southern parcel (south of the PRoW) is visually contained by the large industrial development to the east, the tree belts along the A303 corridor and along the northern boundary, and susceptibility is therefore lower in visual terms"*. We are broadly in agreement of this description.
- 9.8 The overall landscape susceptibility to change for the southern parcels (within which the site is located) is described as **Moderate** *"with susceptibility reduced by the urbanising influences"*.
- 9.9 The overall landscape sensitivity for the southern parcels is, similarly, described as **Moderate** due to their *"eroded character and urban fringe influences, although as noted above the ridgeline associated with 'The Harroway' marks an important break in landscape character and sensitivity, with only the land south of the ridgeline, influenced by the industrial estate, falling within the moderate sensitivity category"*.
- 9.10 The assessment concludes with the recommendation *"Seek to contain the bulk of any new development within the southern parcel, in proximity to the existing settlement edge and contained by the robust vegetation structure along 'The Harroway' (PRoW) that would form a defensible edge and screen built form, as well as maintaining the character and sense of separation associated with the existing Local Gap"*. This recommendation aligns with the conclusion of the Preliminary Landscape and Visual Opinion previously prepared by SLR (August 2023) and is similarly aligned with the *Amended Local Gap Boundaries Plan* that is provided in Appendix 2.
- 9.11 Therefore, whilst we take issue with some aspects of the assessment of our client's site within the LSS (Annex 1), we can conclude, in line with the overall evidence presented within the LSS (and also the LGS), that our client's site has a reduced landscape sensitivity and susceptibility, compared to other parts of the assessment parcel. This is due to the urban influences noted, which have served to significantly degrade the quality and character of the landscape in that part of the overall assessment parcel. Consistent with the overall recommendations of the LGS and LSS, it would be appropriate to remove the site from the Local Gap and to facilitate its redevelopment to provide for much needed new homes at the edge of Andover.

10.0 Evidence: Local Gaps Assessment

Andover – Weyhill – The Pentons Local Gap

- 10.1 As set out in Section 5 above, we broadly support the assessment undertaken of the Andover – Weyhill – Pentons Local Gap and we have no comments in relation to any changes required. However, as previously stated, our concern is that the council do not seem to have taken account of this evidence in preparing the Interim Sustainability Appraisal and indeed in preparing the Draft version of the Local Plan.
- 10.2 In order to be of assistance to the council, SLR have prepared a plan (seen at Figure 2 in Section 5 above and included within Appendix 2) which illustrates the adopted Local Gap boundary, as well as the council's current proposed amendment and also a further amendment that we have proposed to the Local Gap boundary, based on the Local Gaps Assessment and the Landscape Sensitivity Study, which were discussed more fully above.

11.0 Evidence: Housing Trajectory (January 2024)

Existing Commitments

- 11.1 As we set out in Section 2 above (under Housing Supply) we have some concerns that the council is relying on housing supply within the housing trajectory and also within the Local Plan, (Strategic Policy 3 (SS3) and Table 3.3) for which it has not presented any evidence as is required by national planning policy and guidance.
- 11.2 Our concerns relate to the following elements of 'Existing Commitments' shown within the Housing Trajectory (January 2024):
- 11.3 *"Existing housing supply on sites of 5 or more dwellings (net). This includes outline and full permissions and reserved matters approvals, schemes arising through prior approval processes, extant Adopted Local Plan allocations and 'identified capacity' sites where identified by other evidence or work e.g. Brownfield Register or Town Centre Masterplans."* We consider that these include 'Category b)' sites with regard to the definition of 'Deliverable' in the NPPF (page 69). These sites should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years. We are concerned that no evidence of this has been presented by the council and so the number of dwellings shown under this category could well be significantly less than anticipated.
- 11.4 The same point could be made about the dwelling numbers included within the first five year period from the category within the Housing Trajectory described as *"Allocations identified in Made Neighbourhood Plan, as of 1st April 2023."* These would also represent 'Category b)' sites in NPPF terms.

Windfall Allowance

- 11.5 Finally, for the category described in the Housing Trajectory as *"Windfall allowance to take account of unidentified windfall developments from small sites that are anticipated to come forward"* we consider that there is no evidence to support the level of windfall allowance that is shown in the Housing Trajectory. The NPPF (paragraph 72) requires plan-making authorities to provide *"compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends."* In the absence of such evidence, the proposed windfall allowance cannot be relied upon.

Five Year Housing Land Supply

- 11.6 In their representations, Emery Planning raise concerns regarding the council's approach to housing delivery and their five-year land supply. They make the following key points:
- The council's decision to make separate housing land supply calculations for northern and southern Test Valley is contrary to the Framework and associated guidance which envisage a single housing requirement which the five-year housing land supply (5YHLS) should be measured against.
 - The council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply – Based on figures from the Council's Housing Implementation Strategy (February 2024) Emery planning state that there is a shortfall of 425 dwellings ($1,140/313 = 3.64$ years).

- For the draft allocations (and any other sites without planning permission) to be included in the deliverable supply, the onus is on the Council to provide clear evidence of deliverability. Given the Council has not provided clear evidence for any of the 5 proposed allocations in Northern Test Valley significant work is required to demonstrate that these sites are developable beyond the 5YHLS period.
- A Lichfields' study found that sites of this size (i.e. 500-999 dwellings) took on average 4.9 years from the validation of the first application until the completion of the first dwelling. On this basis, even were a planning application made now, the larger sites would not be expected to deliver any dwellings until 2029. The Lichfields study also found the build rate for sites of this size is 67 dwellings per annum and therefore the build rate of up to 100 dwellings per annum as set out in the trajectory is not justified.
- If any of the five allocations don't come forward as expected, this would be detrimental to the ability of the council to meet this part of its housing requirement for the plan period. Emery Planning argue that the delivery of the proposed allocations must be robustly tested.

12.0 Site Promoter Evidence and Stakeholder Engagement

- 12.1 As referred to in Section 1, Land at Homestead Farm is a land interest of Barratt David Wilson Homes (BDW), part of one of the UK's largest house builders. BDW is well accustomed to positive working with Test Valley Borough Council, with two recent site developments being undertaken in Romsey.
- 12.2 The site itself is predominately greenfield, but with two existing dwellings also included. However, the site is available now and, should the site be allocated for residential development, BDW is committed to ensuring that a planning strategy and technical work programme for the site are put in place to ensure that development can commence as soon as possible, following adoption of the Local Plan. As set out in Section 8 above, this would allow delivery of most of the 180 dwellings within the first five-year period of the new Local Plan. We consider that this provides a valuable opportunity to secure early delivery of homes that will positively support the Northern Test Valley housing supply in the early years of the plan. This is a period during which the larger strategic sites (and particularly these at Ludgershall) will be still not be anywhere near ready to deliver new homes.
- 12.3 We have covered extensively, within the Sections above, how the proposed residential development at this site can be fully consistent with the emerging Spatial Strategy, once the council's own recent landscape and local gaps evidence base is fully taken into account. BDW are committed to ensuring that the technical, design and planning work is undertaken thoroughly and robustly. This would aim to provide confidence to the council and local community that the constraints can be fully addressed and that the eventual scheme will be of a very high quality and represent positive place-making through a process that will be inclusive of the views of the local representatives and wider community.

Vision Document

- 12.4 The Vision Document for the site was first provided to the council in August 2022. It has been extensively revised since that date and what is provided now (in Appendix 4) is a version that includes the latest technical work as well as incorporating comments provided by representatives of Penton Mewsey Parish Council. Further details of BDW's engagement with local stakeholders is set out below.
- 12.5 The updated Vision Document provides details of the technical work that has been undertaken in the past year, but in summary this includes:
- Preliminary Landscape and Visual Guidance for a Potential Residential Development by SLR (included as Appendix 3);
 - An update of the transport and highways preliminary assessment work and initial design work on a site vehicular access by Paul Basham Associates;
 - Updated Ecology Technical Note and Habitats Plan by Tetra Tech;
 - Updated surface water drainage strategy and initial flood risk assessment work by Abley Letchford Partnership;
 - A geophysical survey and trial trenching have been undertaken by RPS to assess potential archaeology at the site; and

- Having regard to the above technical work, a full revision of the design work and site masterplan has been undertaken by Cooper Bailie.

Stakeholder Engagement

- 12.6 A programme of stakeholder engagement, including meetings, written briefings and follow up conversations has been undertaken to inform the development of the revised masterplan and to ensure that local community representatives were kept informed about the site proposals. The stakeholder engagement commenced on the 12th October 2023 with Parish, Borough and County Councillors being offered face-to-face meetings ahead of the Local Plan consultation, to ensure that their views could be considered. The timeline and key steps taken in this stakeholder engagement are set out below in Figure 3.

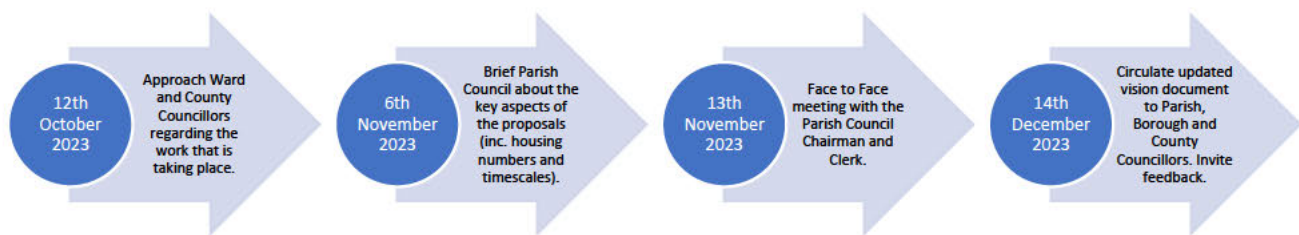


Figure 3: Timeline of key engagement with stakeholders

- 12.7 Throughout this period BDW made every effort to ensure that councillors were fully informed. Meetings were offered and held in a timely manner so that changes to the site masterplan could be incorporated. Updates to the Vision Document, following the face-to-face meeting with the Parish Council, were provided to Parish, Borough and County Councillors so that any additional comments could be received ahead of the Local Plan (Regulation 18 Stage 2) consultation.

Meeting with Representatives of Penton Mewsey Parish Council

- 12.8 On 13th November an initial meeting was held with representatives of Penton Mewsey Parish. This was preceded by issuing the parish councillors with a short summary of the proposals, which included details of the number of homes and timescales of any development.
- 12.9 The draft Vision Document, timescales and access arrangements were discussed at the meeting. The meeting gave the Parish Council representatives the opportunity to influence and shape the proposals at an early stage and to ask questions about the proposals. The meeting was positive and it was agreed that there would be a follow-up in due course, after the consultation on the Draft Test Valley Local Plan.

Updating the Site Masterplan

- 12.10 Following the meeting, BDW updated the masterplan, taking account of the comments received from the Parish Council representatives. The changes included the identification of a secondary access point, as well as further consideration of how the northernmost proposed homes would relate to the important 'Harroway' ridgeline / Public Right of Way and how access to this route and to the wider countryside could be improved.
- 12.11 The resulting updated masterplan, shown in Figure 4 below, is the same version that is set out within the Vision Document provided at Appendix 4.



Figure 4: Updated Masterplan - December 2023

Appendix 1: Landscape and Visual Technical Memorandum (SLR, March 2024)

To: [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Company: Barratt David Wilson Homes
(Southampton)

SLR Consulting Limited

cc:

Date: 7 March 2024

Project No. 403.065021.00001

RE: Land at Homestead Farm, Weyhill Road, Andover Hampshire
Technical note: Response to Local Plan Consultation

Introduction

This Technical Note provides a response to Test Valley Borough Council's (TVBC) Local Plan Consultation and includes consideration of the landscape and visual elements of the following:

- The Interim Sustainability Appraisal (and Appendix IV Housing Sites)
- Local Gaps Study (December 2023)
- Test Valley Landscape Studies, Landscape Sensitivity Study: Final report to Test Valley Borough Council and Annexe 1: Residential sites assessments for Test Valley (January 2024)
- SHELAA 2023 – Appendix 2 - Northern Test Valley Housing and Mixed Use Sites

This note should be read in conjunction with the Preliminary Landscape and Visual Opinion previously prepared by SLR (August 2023) which is appended.

Response

The Interim Sustainability Appraisal (and Appendix IV Housing Sites)

Land at Homestead Farm (the Site) is identified as SHELAA 281 and is assessed on pages 117 to 125 of Appendix IV Housing Sites. Objective 8 provides an assessment against “Conserve and, where possible, enhance the Borough’s landscape, townscapes and settlement character”. A series of three questions are posed against Objective 8:

- Would development affect landscape character and protected landscapes?
- Does the site relate well to the existing settlement and to the immediate context/surrounding area?
- Does the site have the potential to impact the distinction between settlements, or lead to a risk of physical or visual coalescence, where this is relevant to settlement identity?

Against the first of these, the Site scores ‘*Negative*’ and “*Site is likely to have a negative effect on the landscape character. The site may be more sensitive to development in terms of landscape impact*”. In the commentary it is noted that there would be no impact on designated landscape and the character is described as ‘semi enclosed clay plateau farmland’.

The Site is described as “A small, but highly sloping parcel of land immediately to the east of the conservation area, with fine trees and highly constrained for development – highly sensitive”. This is incorrect.

The Site is located approximately 600m south-east of the Conservation Area at Penton Mewsey and beyond the Harrow Way ridgeline. The Site slopes from approximately 85m AOD to approximately 80m AOD. The Site comprises rough grassland and ruderal vegetation enclosed by strong hedge lines with some trees along its boundaries. The character of the Site is also influenced by the industrial development to the east and noise from nearby A-roads.

Against the second question, the Site is assessed as ‘Negative’ and “Is unlikely to relate positively to the existing settlement and/or the settlement edge and/or the immediate surroundings and context” and the assessment notes “Development along the eastern site boundary is within the settlement boundary. However, the majority of the site to the west is greenfield land outside the settlement boundary of Andover and Penton Corner. A development of this scale is not an appropriate extension to Penton Corner or located adjacent to a strategic business park”.

The Site sits between residential development to the west and industrial development to the west and is on the settlement edge. It, therefore, sits within a small break between areas of settlement and is appropriate in a landscape already influenced by built form.

The assessment is similarly ‘Negative’ for the third question “The site would result in a reduction in the distinction / separation of settlements through a degree of visual and / or physical coalescence”. The assessment notes that “The site falls within a local gap area and raises significant issues in respect of settlement distinction, coalescence and the merging of the hamlet of Penton Corner with Andover”.

The Local Gaps Study describes the gap as “located to the west of Andover, between Andover to the south-east and Penton Grafton / Penton Mewsey to the north-west” rather than the gap between Andover and the small hamlet of Penton Corner. A high level gap assessment was undertaken as part of the Preliminary Landscape and Visual Opinion previously prepared by SLR (August 2023) (which is appended) which concluded that:

“The main intention of the Gap Policy is to separate Andover from the historic settlements of Penton Grafton / Mewsey and in so doing protect sensitive open landscapes. Given the enclosed nature of the site it would be possible to develop this site, without increasing the intervisibility of settlement edges. The site is enclosed by residential development to the west, industrial development to the east and the A303 to the south. It does not extend as far north as existing built form. The gap between settlements would not, therefore, be compromised by the release of the site for development”.

We would argue with the ‘Negative’ scoring against each of these elements as described above. It is also noted that this scoring is incongruous with the Council’s latest evidence including the Local Gaps Study (December 2023) and the Landscape Sensitivity Study Annex 1 (January 2024) which are reviewed below.

Local Gaps Study (December 2023)

An assessment of local gaps between settlements has been undertaken to review “the efficacy and the effectiveness of the existing Local Gaps designated in the extant and emerging Local Plan, together with recommendations for Test Valley Borough Council’s (TVBC’s) consideration as to how the Local Gaps should be addressed in the emerging Local Plan”. The Andover – Weyhill – The Pentons Local Gap is of relevance to this technical note.



The location and context of the *Andover – Weyhill – The Pentons* Local Gap is described as “located to the west of Andover, between Andover to the south-east and Penton Grafton / Penton Mewsey to the north-west”.

Within the evaluation section of the assessment it is noted that “*The gap physically and perceptually prevents the settlements of Andover merging with Penton Grafton and Penton Mewsey. It is effective in this function by virtue of the combination of the scale of landscape elements and the disposition of vegetation*”. The *Harroway* is described as a visually prominent ridgeline upon which any proposed development would “*harm the sense of openness in the wider context*”.

The assessment notes that “*Vegetation structure within the existing gap contributes to the sense of separation between Andover, Weyhill and The Pentons, particularly noting the transition from the modern edge of Andover to the historic, smaller scale settlements of Penton Grafton and Penton Mewsey. Existing built form within this gap has degraded the function of the Local Gap in the southeast, although the ridgeline to the north of this, on which the ancient vegetated holloway ‘The Harroway’ is located, is also critical in defining a sense of separation, physically and visually*”.

Importantly, and of relevance to this technical note, the assessment states that “*Consideration could... be given to amending the Local Gap boundary in the southeast of this gap, to the south of and below the ridgeline on which ‘The Harroway’ is located*”. The Site is to the south of ‘*The Harroway*’ and in the south-eastern area of the gap. We note that the Local Gap boundary included on Inset Map 1 – Andover – Charlton has already illustrated a potential amendment to the area of the Local Gap.

We have appended a figure ‘Amended Gap Boundaries Plan’ which illustrates the historic, amended and our proposed Local Gap boundary. The boundary we have proposed uses ‘*The Harroway*’ as a strong and defensible boundary to the south and the area of Penton Corner has been excluded (as aligned with the amended boundary shown on Inset Map 1). Importantly, the proposed boundary does not decrease the physical size of the gap between Andover and Penton Grafton and Penton Mewsey.

Test Valley Landscape Studies, Landscape Sensitivity Study: Final report to Test Valley Borough Council and Annexe 1: Residential sites assessments for Test Valley (January 2024)

The Landscape Sensitivity Study considers the sensitivity of candidate sites to change arising from large scale residential, (including mixed use) and employment purposes. The assessment of a wider assessment parcel, which the Site forms part of, is provided in pages 38 to 43 in Annexe 1. The area of land assessed extends further north and west than the site, extending beyond the Harroway.

Under designated landscape interests, the assessment notes Penton Grafton Conservation Area. As noted above, whilst the overall assessment parcel extends towards the Conservation Area, the Site is contained entirely to the south of the Harroway and has very limited intervisibility with the Conservation Area as a result of landform and intervening vegetation.

The landscape value of the overall assessment parcel is described as Local, noting rural qualities, some long views but with, otherwise, a high degree of enclosure. As noted in the Landscape Sensitivity Study Part One, guidance produced by the Landscape Institute, (TGN/02/21) describes a best practice methodology for assessing landscape value in undesignated landscapes. This includes consideration of Natural Heritage; Cultural Heritage; Landscape Condition; Associations; Distinctiveness; Recreational; Perceptual (Scenic); Perceptual (Wildness and Tranquillity) and Functionality. The assessment of landscape value included within the Annexe 1 does not provide a detailed consideration of the



assessment parcel against these criteria, nor does it deal with the level of landscape change and restoration/enhancement potential and opportunity identified as an important factor in the methodology set out in the Landscape Sensitivity Study Part One. The conclusion of a Local level of value is not, therefore, evidenced appropriately. The description of a Local level of value provided in the Landscape Sensitivity Study Part One is as follows:

“May contain notable concentration of locally rare landscape types/examples of district importance, which may be recognised through local designation, or have moderate degree of representativeness of wider landscape character, and or contain a moderate concentration of positive key landscape characteristics identified in the LCA. May include assets of local importance, e.g. a locally listed landscape or may include locally designated nature conservation interests. May have featured in artistic or written works of local importance. The landscape may have a moderate/low degree of intactness or potentially a high degree of landscape fragmentation and associated low degree of functionality in terms of living systems, natural resources and natural capital assets. It may therefore have notable potential for restoration and enhancement with regard to green or blue infrastructure, nature pathways and ecological networks, and/or exhibit considerable restoration and enhancement opportunities”.

The description of the Assessment Parcel's in relation to value does not identify the characteristics noted within the description of Local value above. It aligns more closely with the description of Neighbourhood (Community level) value. This would accord with the assessment of value undertaken within the Preliminary Landscape and Visual Opinion.

Paragraph 1.1.163 notes that *“While the parcel cluster generally has a high degree of enclosure, its location at the edge of Andover brings notable urban influences in places, such as haphazard infill development, telephone masts and cables, industrial units, roads, the railway line and influences from rear gardens of residential properties”.* We welcome this description which aligns with our own description of landscape character assessed in the Preliminary Landscape and Visual Opinion.

In its assessment of Landscape Susceptibility Annexe 1 notes the *“peri urban greenfield land appearance, character and quality”* and describes the Harrow Way which *“bisects the two parcels marks an important separation point between this character and the historic landscape associated with Penton Park and its setting on the northern side of the ridge”.* It goes further to say that *“Sense of tranquillity and remoteness is locally eroded due to the urban influences at the edge of Andover which reduces susceptibility in perceptual and experiential terms”* and *“The southern parcels (within which the Site is located) in the cluster are markedly influenced by large scale, modern development, notably the large industrial estate to the east and the busy A303 road corridor immediately south. Small, 20th century residential gardens and associated vegetated boundaries define the settlement interface to the west”.* In relation to visual characteristics and intervisibility the assessment notes that *“The southern parcel (south of the PRow) is visually contained by the large industrial development to the east, the tree belts along the A303 corridor and along the northern boundary, and susceptibility is therefore lower in visual terms”.* We are broadly in agreement of this description

The Overall Landscape Susceptibility to change for the southern parcels (within which the Site is located) is described as Moderate *“with susceptibility reduced by the urbanising influences”.*

The overall landscape sensitivity for the southern parcels (within which the Site is located) is, similarly, described as Moderate due to their *“eroded character and urban fringe influences, although as noted above the ridgeline associated with ‘The Harroway’ marks an important break in landscape character and sensitivity, with only the land south of the ridgeline, influenced by the industrial estate, falling within the moderate sensitivity category”.*



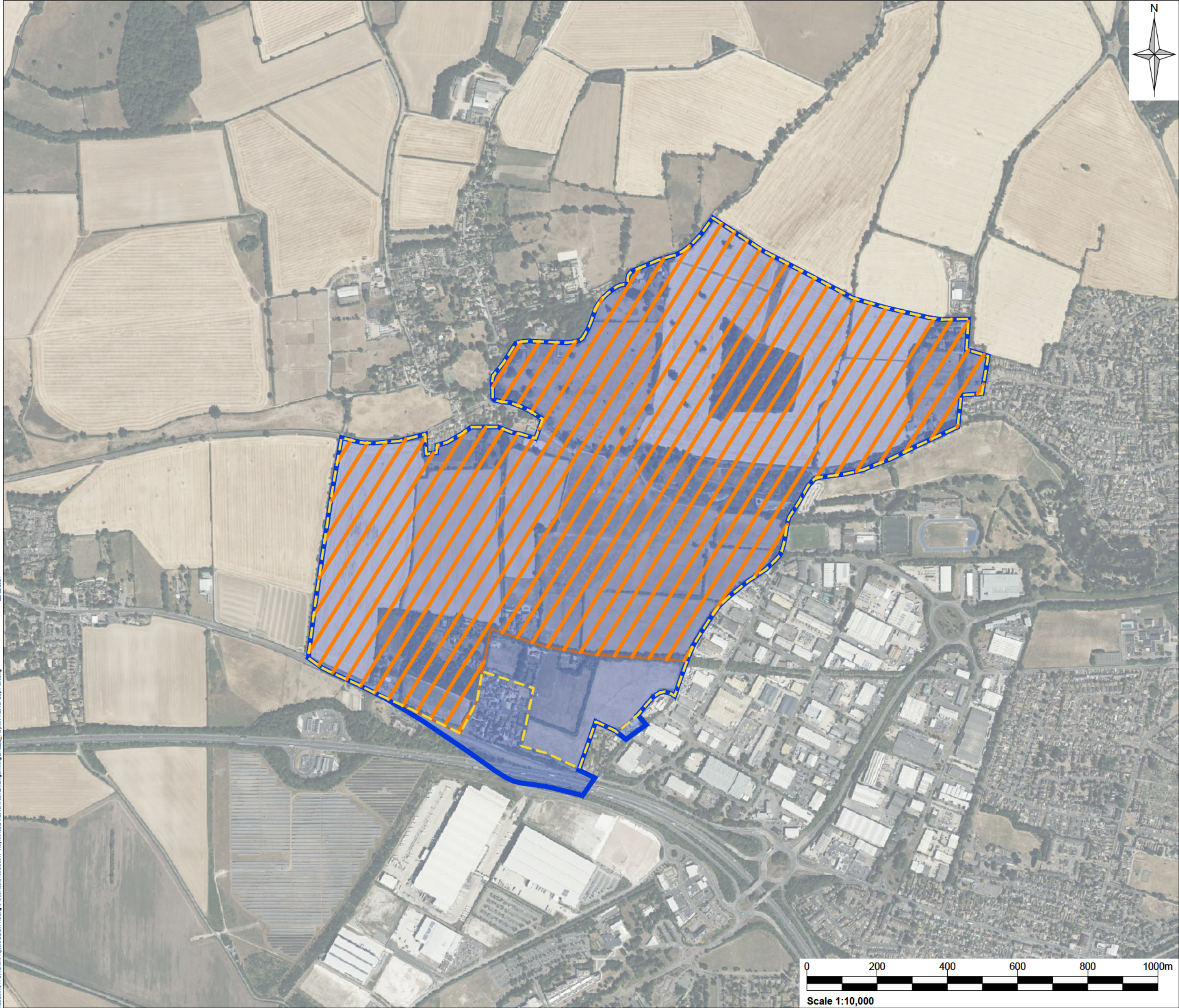
The assessment concludes with the recommendation “*Seek to contain the bulk of any new development within the southern parcel, in proximity to the existing settlement edge and contained by the robust vegetation structure along ‘The Harroway’ (PRoW) that would form a defensible edge and screen built form, as well as maintaining the character and sense of separation associated with the existing Local Gap*”. This recommendation aligns with the conclusion of the Preliminary Landscape and Visual Opinion previously prepared by SLR (August 2023) and is similarly aligned with the Amended Gap Boundaries Plan’ appended to this note.

SHELAA 2023 – Appendix 2 - Northern Test Valley Housing and Mixed Use Sites




The Site (SHELAA Ref 281) has been assessed on page 52 of Appendix 2. Within the Site Details section the Site is as a combination of Brownfield (1.68ha) and Greenfield (2.97ha). The character of the landscape is described as “*Portway Industrial Estate, dwellings and agriculture*”. No further details of relevance to landscape are included within the SHELAA although we note that it confirms that the site is not designated for landscape and visual (or Open Space) reasons.



Appendix 2: Andover – Weyhill – Pentons Local Gap Amendments Plan (SLR, March 2024)



Notes:

- Legend:
-  TEST VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL: LOCAL GAPS ASSESSMENT - ANDOVER - WEYHILL - THE PENTONS LOCAL GAP (DECEMBER 2023)
 -  DRAFT TEST VALLEY LOCAL PLAN 2040 - ANDOVER - THE PENTONS LOCAL GAP (FEBRUARY 2024)
 -  PROPOSED THE PENTONS LOCAL GAP EXTENTS

Rev	Amendments	Date	By	Chk	Auth
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Drawing Status & Suitability Code

Client
BDW TRADING LTD

Project
WEYHILL ROAD, ANDOVER

Drawing Title
AMENDED GAP BOUNDARIES PLAN

Scale 1:10,000	@ A3	SLR Project No. 403.04993.00047
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Date FEB 2024	Date FEB 2024	Date FEB 2024	Date FEB 2024
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Drawing Number WR-005	Rev.
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Scale 1:10,000

22/02/2024

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Appendix 3: Preliminary Landscape and Visual Guidance for a Potential Residential Development: Weyhill Road, Andover (SLR, August 2023)



Preliminary Landscape and Visual Guidance for a Potential Residential Development

Weyhill Road, Andover

Barratt David Wilson Homes (Southampton)

[Redacted]

Prepared by:

SLR Consulting Limited

[Redacted]
[Redacted]

SLR Project No.: 403.065021.00001

Client Reference No:

1 August 2023

Revision: 01

Revision Record

Revision	Date	Prepared By	Checked By	Authorised By
01	24 August 2023	EJ	JS	JS

Basis of Report

This document has been prepared by SLR Consulting Limited (SLR) with reasonable skill, care and diligence, and taking account of the timescales and resources devoted to it by agreement with Barratt David Wilson Homes (Southampton) (the Client) as part or all of the services it has been appointed by the Client to carry out. It is subject to the terms and conditions of that appointment.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

SLR Consulting Ltd (SLR) was instructed by Barratt David Wilson Homes (Southampton), (BDW), to appraise the potential landscape and visual constraints to residential development at Weyhill Road, west of Andover. The site boundary is illustrated by the red line on drawing WR-001.

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 constraints and opportunities, and to advise on the overall design of the development and any mitigation measures.

1.1 Methodology

This appraisal has been carried out by an experienced Chartered Landscape Architect.

This assessment has been carried out by an experienced Chartered Landscape Architect 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) and TGN 02/21.

The assessment is based upon a desk top assessment of relevant plans, guidance and character assessments, as well as a two thorough site assessment carried out in July 2019 and March 2022.

Landscape, as defined in the European Landscape Convention, is “*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. 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.

Judgements have been discussed and agreed with another Chartered Landscape Architect in accordance with best practice and reviewed by another experienced Chartered Landscape Architect.

1.2 The Study Area

The study area is defined on Drawing WR-001. This was defined initially by desk top analysis of plans and aerial photographs and was then further refined by site assessment.



2.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

2.1 National Policy: National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.1.1 National Planning Policy Framework

The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2021) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

In relation to landscape, the NPPF defines sustainability as including the protection and enhancement of the *"natural, built and historic environment"* (paragraph 8).

Paragraph 100 relates to rights of way and access, stating that these should be *"protected and enhanced"*. It is noted that better facilities should be provided for users of rights of way, for example by *"adding links to existing rights of way including National Trails"*.

Paragraph 130 of the NPPF indicates that decisions should ensure that developments *"...are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting."*

Paragraph 131 states that *"Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments"* and notes that *"Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible"*.

Paragraph 174 of the NPPF states that the planning system, *"should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by [inter alia] ...protecting and enhancing valued landscapes"* and by *"recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside"*. Paragraph 175 states that the planning system should *"distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites"*.

2.2 Designations

Landscape and landscape related designations are illustrated on drawing WR-001.

There are no formal public footpaths crossing the site, nor open access areas, or village greens. There are no heritage related designations such as conservation areas or listed buildings in the immediate vicinity of the site.

Harrow Way, a local byway, extends along the northern edge of the site, and a further byway passes adjacent to the industrial estate to the east of the site. A disused road (previously Weyhill Road) passes along the southern edge of the site, and the A342 and A303 also pass to the south of the site.

There are no other landscape or landscape related designations within or adjacent to the site.

The site is included within a Local Gap as defined in the Development Plan (see below) which is a spatial planning policy.



2.3 The Development Plan

2.3.1 Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2011-2029)

The Revised Local Plan for Test Valley (Local Plan) forms the main part of the Development Plan for the Borough. It includes the core objectives which underpin the policies and proposals which form the spatial strategy. The Local Plan will guide future development within the Borough of Test Valley over the plan period 2011 – 2029.

Policy E2: ‘Protect, Conserve and Enhance the Landscape Character of the Borough’ seeks to *“ensure the protection, conservation and enhancement of the landscape of the Borough”*.

The site is on land which is outside of the settlement boundary and within a Local Gap (Andover – The Pentons). Policy E3 states that development will be permitted within Local Gaps provided that *“it would not diminish the physical separation and/or visual separation”* and *“it would not individually or cumulatively with other existing or proposed development compromise the integrity of the gap”*.

2.3.2 Test Valley Revised Local Plan DPD 2011-2029 Policy E3: Local Gaps Topic Paper

The Topic Paper seeks to provide context and rationale to the Local Gap designations on the Borough and to consider the approach to including a Local Gap policy in the Revised Local Plan.

The Andover – The Pentons Local Gap is described in detail. The Topic Paper states that *“visual separation is dependent on maintaining the undeveloped character of the farmland between Andover and these villages”* and notes that *“there is very little in the way of significant belts of vegetation or variation in topography to provide enclosure or natural screening”*.

The site is now being promoted through the Local Plan process.



3.0 Potential Landscape and Visual Constraints and Opportunities

3.1 Introduction

The following landscape and visual appraisal is based upon both a desk top assessment of existing character assessments and plans as well as a site-based survey.

Overall visibility has been determined by a desk top assessment of plans and aerial photographs and by site visit. Photographs have been included to illustrate some of the key characteristics of the site and its context. The location of all viewpoints is illustrated on drawing WR-001, and the photographs are included on drawings WR-003 to WR-004.

3.2 Existing Landscape Character of the Site and its Context

There is a nested series of existing character assessments which provide a useful context to the character of the site. Further details of each are set out below.

3.2.1 Existing Character Assessments of the Wider Context

At a national scale, the site is located within Natural England's Natural Character Area (NCA) 130, Hampshire Downs. Key characteristics of this character area which are of relevance to this site include the following:

- *"Within the sheltered valleys ... the network of hedgerows ... gives a strong sense of enclosure;*
- *...the more modern, rapidly expanding towns of Basingstoke and Andover are on downland sites at the head of the Loddon and Test Valleys".*

In the Hampshire Integrated Character Assessment (2010) the site located within the Open Downs Landscape Character Type (LCT), and the Andover Open Downs Landscape Character Area (LCA) (Area 8d). This area is described as being an *"open, expansive landscape with long distant views"*. Key characteristics of this character area of relevance to the site include:

- *There is little woodland cover;*
- *Urban edges of Andover extend into this area;*
- *Tranquil and remote away from Andover.*

In the Test Valley Borough Landscape Character Assessment (2018) the site is classified as part of LCA 9A, North Andover Plateau, which forms part of LCT9 Semi-Enclosed Clay Plateau Farmland. Key characteristics of this character area of relevance to the site include the following:

- *"Well hedged mix of mainly pasture associated with settlements; and*
- *Important countryside gaps between Andover and other settlements".*

Key detractors of relevance to the site are described as:

- *"Visual intrusion from pylons crossing the area;*
- *Views to large-scale buildings within business parks on the edge of Andover to the south of A303 (within LCA 10C); and*
- *Suburban boundary treatments in rural locations".*



A series of Local Natural and Cultural Landscape Issues are defined and include the following:

- *“Potential increase in urban influence on landscape north and west of Andover*
- *Potential loss of distinction between the Pentons and Andover which could significantly impact upon the mixed landscape along the southern boundary of this character area”.*

3.2.2 Assessment of the Character of the Site and its Immediate Context

The site falls gently to the south from a maximum elevation of approximately 90m AOD just north of Harrow Way to approximately 85m AOD at the southern boundary.

The site includes rough grassland and ruderal vegetation. There are strong, often tall, hedgerows on all sides of the site, but tall industrial buildings on the edge of Andover are visible across much of the site, as well as glimpses of residential properties to the west and east. Noise from the A303 and A342 is audible across the site.

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

- Enclosed rough grassland and ruderal vegetation;
- Views of the settlement edges (industrial and residential);
- Noise from nearby A roads.

The overall character of the site accords with the description of the North Andover Plateau described in the Test Valley Borough Landscape Character Assessment (2018), but particularly relates well to the description of the Andover settlement edge in that character assessment. The site is an enclosed, well-hedged field which is strongly influenced by the adjacent urban edges.

1.1.1 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, nor does it contain or is it adjacent to a landscape-related designation.

GLVIA3 states that the value of undesignated sites should also be considered. Table 1 of Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 2/21 supersedes Box 5.1 of GLVIA3 and 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 generally poor, including waste ground and clear views of the nearby industrial estate. There is no formal recreation access to the site. It is, therefore, concluded that the value of the site is low.

3.2.3 Susceptibility of the Landscape

Whilst the site comprises open fields, the strong visual influence of the adjacent settlement edges, and the background noise from the nearby A roads, creates a strong sense that this site is within a settled area. Consequently this area has a medium to low susceptibility to residential development.



3.2.4 Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

In overview, the site generally has low value and a medium to low susceptibility to residential development; consequently the site is low to medium sensitivity overall.

3.2.5 Conclusions on Landscape Attributes of the Site

The site has been classified as part of the North Andover Plateau but is particularly influenced by the settlement (industrial) edge to the east (and to a lesser extent to the west), and by noise from A roads to the south.

The site comprises rough grassland with ruderal vegetation which is strongly enclosed by established hedgerows. The site is of low scenic quality and is strongly influenced by the settlement (industrial) edge, and therefore has a low to medium sensitivity to residential development.

3.3 Existing Visibility and Views of the Site

3.3.1 Overall Visibility

As has been noted at 3.2.4, above, the site is visually enclosed by strong hedgerows. A further degree of enclosure is provided by existing buildings to the west and east.

As has been noted there are no public rights of way within the site. Views are therefore limited to glimpses from Harrow Way (local byway), to the north, and also glimpsed views from old Weyhill Road, to the south. Residential receptors have restricted views into the site.

3.3.2 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:

- Walkers on Harrow Way;
- Walkers/pedestrians on old Weyhill Road, immediately to the south of the site; and
- Residents.

3.3.3 Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

Walkers and residents are likely to be particularly susceptible to change, as they are more likely to be focused on views of the landscape. Vehicle drivers and passengers are less susceptible to visual change as they have only transitional views of the landscape.

In relation to value, none of the potential visual receptors are within landscape or landscape-related designations, nor are they linked with visitor destinations or cultural associations. However, Harrow Way is a published byway and appears to be well-used.

It therefore follows that walkers along Harrow Way and residents would have the highest sensitivity to development (medium/high) and vehicle users would be less sensitive (medium).

3.3.4 Assessment of visual effects

Walkers along Harrow Way would experience glimpses of development through gaps in existing boundary vegetation (see Viewpoint 1 and 2). In all cases tall industrial development already characterises part of the view. The magnitude of visual change would be at most Slight/Negligible and the level of visual effect would be Minor and negative at most.



Potential views of new development available to residents to the west would be largely screened by existing boundary vegetation and views are already influenced by tall industrial development to the east. The magnitude of visual change would be at most Slight/Negligible and the level of visual effect would be Minor and negative at most.

Potential views of new development available to pedestrians and vehicle users along old Weyhill Road would also be largely screened by existing boundary vegetation (see Viewpoint 3). Views would be available from a single existing field gate (see Viewpoint 4) but existing vegetation bounding the southern part of the site truncates the view and any development proposed in the northern part of the site would not be visible. Industrial development to the east is visible above hedgerows.

3.4 Summary of Potential Landscape and Visual Constraints and Opportunities

In landscape character terms much of this site is open and green, but also strongly influenced by existing settlement (industrial) to the east and less strongly to the west.

The visual envelope of any development at the site would be extremely limited due to the strong screening effect of existing hedgerows and buildings around the site. Receptors are likely to be limited to glimpses from Harrow Way, to the north, and old Weyhill Road, to the south. Visibility from nearby residential receptors is likely to be very limited.

For these reasons it is concluded that this site has capacity for residential development, since the site is already strongly influenced by built development and both landscape and visual effects would be localised due to the visually enclosed nature of the site.

3.5 Local Gap designation

It was noted in the planning context section of this report that the site is within a Local Gap designation.

The landscape and visual analysis indicates that the site is visually enclosed by strong hedgerows with a further degree of enclosure provided by existing built form to the east and west. The character of the landscape is of low scenic quality and is strongly influenced by the settlement (industrial) edge.

Whilst the site is within a Local Gap the functionality of, and therefore justification for, the gap at this location is significantly diminished by the prominence of industrial development to the east, the distribution centre immediately to the south and background noise associated with commercial uses and road traffic. The site is already experienced as part of the urban envelope as a result of the influence of surrounding uses.

It is noted that the collection of dwellings at Penton Corner cannot reasonably be considered to be a settlement in their own right. They, therefore, do not form part of the settlements referenced in the Gap Policy which the policy seeks to keep separate from the edge of Andover.

The main intention of the Gap Policy is to separate Andover from the historic settlements of Penton Grafton / Mewsey (see description in Policy E3: Local Gaps Topic Paper) and in so doing protect sensitive open landscapes. Given the enclosed nature of the site it would be possible to develop this site, without increasing the intervisibility of settlement edges. The site is enclosed by residential development to the west, industrial development to the east and the A303 to the south. It does not extend as far north as existing built form. The gap between settlements would not, therefore, be compromised by the release of the site for development.



Appendix A Method used in Assessing Landscape and Visual Effects



A.1 Introduction

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify the 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). GLVIA3¹ (paragraph 2.22) states that these two elements, although inter-related, should be assessed separately. 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 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.

Impacts can be defined as the action being taken, whereas effects are the changes result from that action. This method of assessment assesses landscape and visual effects.

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.

In LVIAAs which form part of an EIA, it is necessary for identify significant and non-significant effects. In non-EIA LVIAAs, also known as appraisals, the same principles and process as LVIA may be applied but, in so doing, it is not required to establish whether the effects arising are or are not significant given that the exercise is not being undertaken for EIA purposes (see GLVIA3 statement of clarification 1/13 10-06-13, Landscape Institute).

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.

A.2 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).

A.2.1 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, as set out in Table A1 below.

The table sets out the interpretation of landscape designations in terms of the value attached to different landscape receptors. As GLVIA3 (paragraph 5.24) notes, at the local scale of an LVIA study area it may be found that the landscape value of a specific area may be different to that suggested by the formal designation.

Table A1: Interpretation of Landscape Designations

Designation	Description	Value
World Heritage Sites	Unique sites, features or areas identified as being of international importance according to UNESCO criteria. Consideration should be given to their settings especially where these contribute to the special qualities for which the landscape is valued.	International



Designation	Description	Value
National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Scenic Areas	Areas of landscape identified as being of national importance for their natural beauty (and in the case of National Parks the opportunities they offer for outdoor recreation). Consideration should be given to their settings especially where these contribute to the special qualities for which the landscape is valued.	National
Registered Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest	Gardens and designed landscapes included on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest as Grade I, II* or II.	National
Local Landscape Designations (such as Special Landscape Areas, Areas of Great Landscape Value and similar) included in local planning documents	Areas of landscape identified as having importance at the local authority level.	Local Authority
Undesignated landscapes of community value	Landscapes which do not have any formal designation but which are assessed as having value to local communities, perhaps on the basis of demonstrable physical attributes which elevate it above ordinary countryside.	Local Authority/Community
Landscapes of low value	Landscapes in poor condition or fundamentally altered by presence of intrusive man-made structures. Landscapes with no demonstrable physical attributes which elevate it above ordinary countryside.	Low

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 the Table A2 below. This is based on Table 1 of Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 2/21. These factors are not fixed and should be reviewed on a case by case basis. When assessing landscape value of a site it is important to consider not only the site itself but also its context.

Landscapes may be judged to be of local authority or community value on the basis of one or more of these factors. There may also be occasional circumstances where an undesignated landscape may be judged to be of national value, for example where it has a clear connection with a nationally designated landscape or is otherwise considered to be of equivalent value to a national designation. Similarly, on occasions there may be areas within designated landscapes that do not meet the designation criteria or demonstrate the key characteristics/special qualities in a way that is consistent with the rest of the designated area.

An overall assessment is made for each landscape receptor, based on an overview of the above criteria, to determine its value - whether for example it is comparable to a local authority landscape designation or similar, or whether it is of value to local people and communities. For example, an intact landscape in good condition, where scenic quality, tranquillity, and/or conservation interests make a particular contribution to the landscape, or where there are important cultural or historical associations, might be of equivalent value to a local landscape designation. Conversely, a degraded landscape in poor condition,



with no particular scenic qualities or natural or cultural heritage interest is likely to be considered of limited landscape value.

Table A2: Factors Considered in Assessing the Value of Non-Designated Landscapes

Factor	Criteria
Natural Heritage	Landscape with clear evidence of ecological, geological, geomorphological or physiographic interest. Presence of wildlife and habitats that contribute to the sense of place. Landscape which contains valued natural capital assets that contribute to ecosystem services.
Cultural Heritage	Landscape with clear evidence of archaeological, historical or cultural interest. Landscape which contributes to the significance of heritage assets. Landscape which offers a dimension of time depth.
Landscape Condition	Landscape which is in a good physical state both with regard to individual elements and overall landscape structure. Absence of detracting/incongruous features.
Associations	Landscape which is connected with notable people, events and the arts.
Distinctiveness	Landscape that has a strong sense of identity or place. Presence of distinctive features that are characteristic of a place, or presence of rare/unusual features that confer a strong sense of place. Includes landscape that makes an important contribution to the character or identity of a settlement.
Recreational	Landscape offering recreational opportunities where experience of landscape is important. Includes open access areas, common land and rights of way where appreciation of the landscape is an important element of the experience. Landscape that forms part of a view that that is important to the enjoyment of a recreational activity.
Perceptual (Scenic)	Landscape that appeals to the senses, primarily the visual sense. Distinctive features, or distinctive combinations of features. Strong aesthetic qualities. Visual diversity or contrasts. Memorable/distinctive views or landmarks, or landscape that contributes to these.
Perceptual (Wildness and Tranquillity)	Landscape with a strong perceptual value notably remoteness, wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies.
Functional	Landscape which performs a clearly identifiable and valuable function, particularly in the healthy functioning of the landscape. Natural hydrological systems, important parts of the green infrastructure network, pollinator rich habitats. Landscapes that have strong physical or functional links with an adjacent national landscape designation or are important to the appreciation of the designated landscape and its special qualities.

A.2.2 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 and makes reference to the criteria set out in Table A3 below. Aspects of the character of the landscape that may be affected by a particular type of development



include landform, skylines, land cover, enclosure, human influences including settlement pattern and aesthetic and perceptual aspects such as the scale of the landscape, its form, line, texture, pattern and grain, complexity, and its sense of movement, remoteness, wildness or tranquillity.

For example, an urban landscape which contains a number of industrial buildings may have a low susceptibility to buildings of a similar scale and character. Conversely a rural landscape containing only remote farmsteads is likely to have a high susceptibility to large scale built development.

Table A3: Landscape Receptor Susceptibility to Change

Susceptibility	Criteria
High	The landscape receptor is highly susceptible to the proposed development because the key characteristics of the landscape have no or very limited ability to accommodate it without transformational adverse effects, taking account of the existing character and quality of the landscape.
Medium	The landscape receptor is moderately susceptible to the proposed development because the relevant characteristics of the landscape have some ability to accommodate it without transformational adverse effects, taking account of the existing character and quality of the landscape.
Low	The landscape receptor has low susceptibility to the proposed development because the relevant characteristics of the landscape are generally able to accommodate it without transformational adverse effects, taking account of the existing character and quality of the landscape.

A.2.3 Defining Sensitivity

As has been noted above, the sensitivity of landscape receptors is defined in terms of the relationship between value and susceptibility to change as indicated in Figure A1 below. This summarises the general nature of the relationship but it is not formulaic and only indicates general categories of sensitivity. Professional judgement is applied on a case by case basis in determining sensitivity of individual receptors with the diagram only serving as a guide.

Table A4 below summarises the nature of the relationship but it is not formulaic and only indicates general categories of sensitivity. Judgements are made about each landscape receptor, with the table serving as a guide.

Where, taking into account the component judgements about the value and susceptibility of the landscape receptor, sensitivity is judged to lie between levels, an intermediate assessment of high/medium or medium/low is adopted. In a few limited cases a category of less than low (very low) may be used where the landscape is of low value and susceptibility is particularly low.



Figure A1: Example Levels of Sensitivity defined by Value and Susceptibility of Landscape Receptors

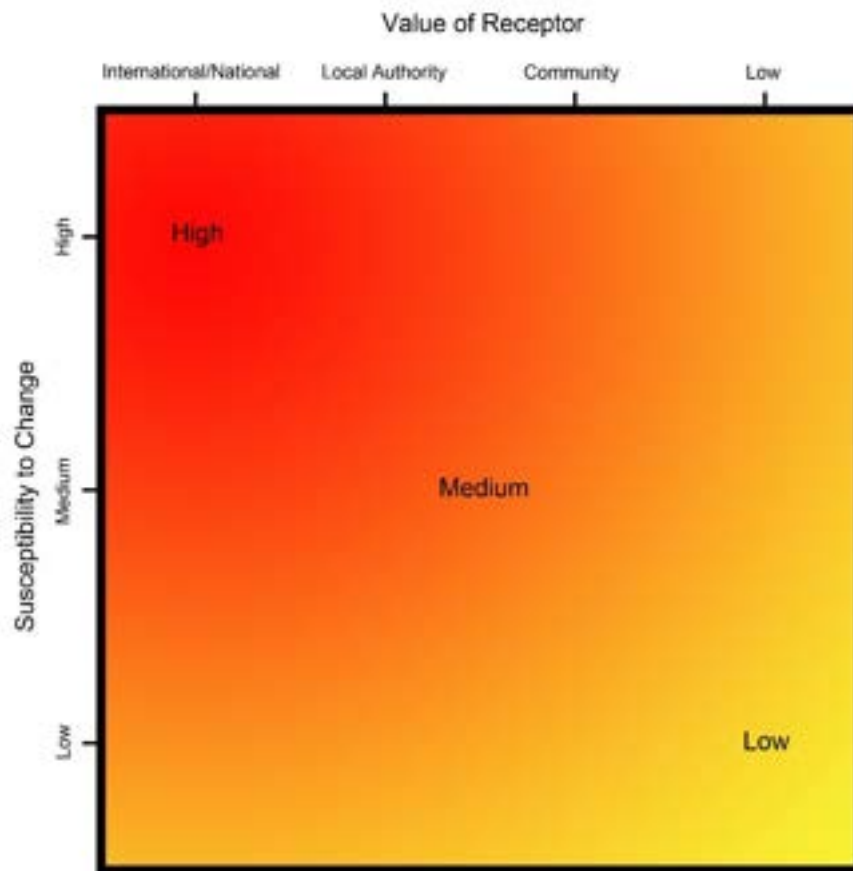


Table A4: Example Levels of Sensitivity defined by Value and Susceptibility of Landscape Receptors

Sensitivity	Criteria
High	The landscape receptor is of international or national value and is considered to have high susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development OR The landscape receptor is of national value and is considered to have medium susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development.
Medium	The landscape receptor is of international or national value and is considered to have low susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development OR The landscape receptor is of local authority value and is considered to have high susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development OR The landscape receptor is of local authority value and is considered to have medium susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development. OR The landscape receptor is of community value and is considered to have high susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development
Low	The landscape receptor is of local authority value and is considered to have low susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development OR The landscape receptor is of community value and is considered to have medium susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development OR The landscape receptor is of community value and is considered to have low susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development.

A.3 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.

A.3.1 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.



Table A5: Magnitude of Landscape Change: Size/Scale of Change

Category	Description
Large level of landscape change	<p>There would be a large level of change in landscape character, and especially to the key characteristics if, for example, the proposed development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • becomes a dominant feature in the landscape, changing the balance of landscape characteristics; and/or • would dominate important visual connections with other landscape types, where this is a key characteristic of the area.
Medium level of landscape change	<p>There would be a medium level of change in landscape character, and especially to the key characteristics if, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the proposed development would be more prominent but would not change the overall balance or composition of the landscape; and/or • key views to other landscape types may be interrupted intermittently by the proposed development, but these views would not be dominated by them.
Small level of landscape change	<p>There would be a small level of change in landscape character, and especially to the key characteristics if, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there would be no introduction of new elements into the landscape and the proposed development would not significantly change the composition/balance of the landscape.
Negligible/no level of landscape change	<p>There would be a negligible or no level of change in landscape character, and especially to the key characteristics if, for example, the proposed development would be a small element and/or would be a considerable distance from the receptor.</p>

A.3.2 Geographical Extent of Change

The geographical extent of landscape change is assessed by determining the area over which the changes will influence the landscape, as set out in Table A6. 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.

Table A6: Magnitude of Landscape Change: Geographical Extent

Category	Description
Large extent of landscape change	Affects a wider area, far from the site itself.
Medium extent of landscape change	Landscape change extends beyond the site boundaries.
Small extent of landscape change	Change affecting a localised area, often focused on the site itself.
Negligible extent of landscape change	The change will affect only a negligible extent of the landscape receptor under consideration.



A.3.3 Duration and Reversibility of Change

The duration of the landscape change is categorised in Table A7 below, which considers whether the change will be permanent and irreversible or temporary and reversible.

Table A7: Magnitude of Landscape Change: Duration and Reversibility

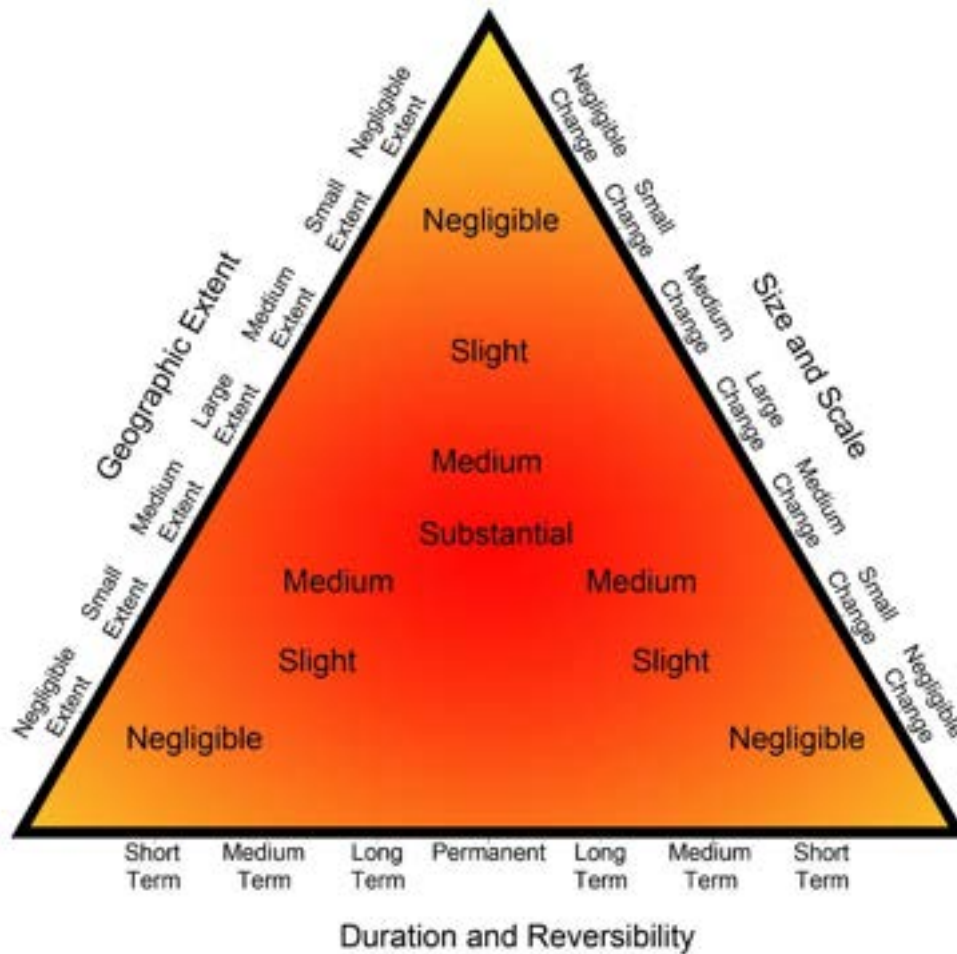
Category	Description
Permanent/Irreversible	Magnitude of change that will last for 25 years or more is deemed permanent or irreversible.
Long term reversible	Effects that are theoretically reversible but will endure for between 10 and 25 years.
Medium term reversible	Effects that are reversible and/or will last for between 5 and 10 years.
Temporary/Short term reversible	As above that are reversible and will last from 0 to 5 years - includes construction effects.

A.3.4 Deciding on Overall Magnitude of Landscape Change

The relationships between the three factors that contribute to assessment of the magnitude of landscape effects are illustrated graphically, as a guide, in Diagram A2 below. Various combinations are possible, and the overall magnitude of each effect is judged on merit rather than by formulaic application of the relationships in the diagram.



Figure A2: Determining the Magnitude of Landscape Change

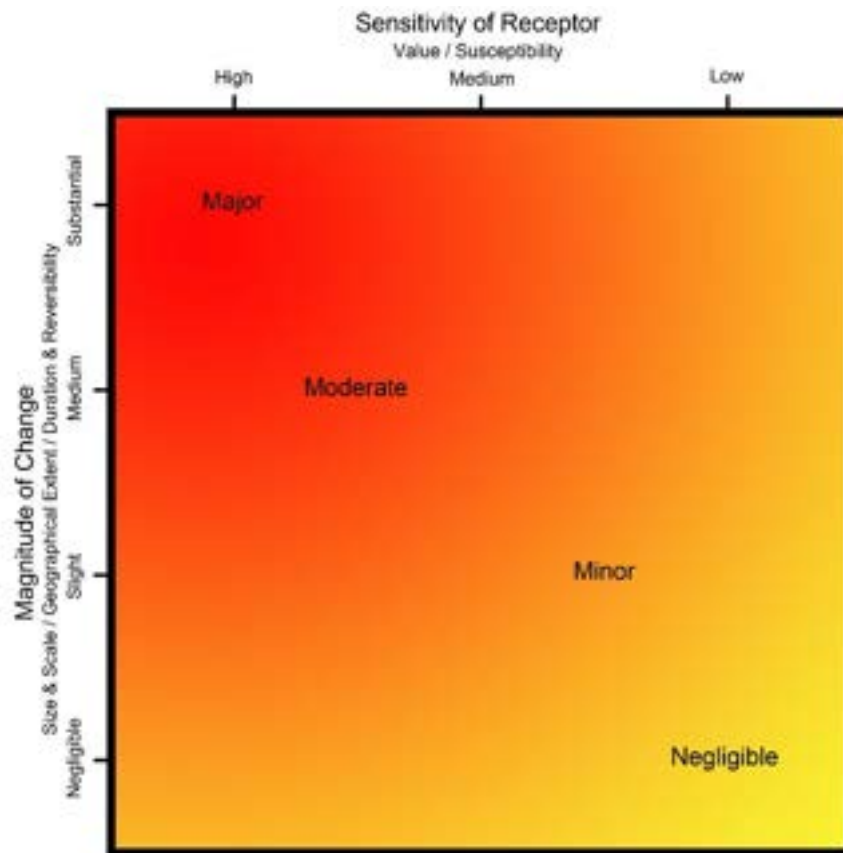


A.4 Assessment of Landscape Effects and Significance

The assessment of overall landscape effects is defined in terms of the relationship between the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of the change. The diagram below (Figure A3) summarises the nature of the relationship but it is not formulaic. Judgements are made about each landscape effect using this diagram as a guide.



Figure A3: Assessment of Landscape Effects



A.5 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.

- Communities within settlements (i.e. towns, villages and hamlets);
- Residents of individual properties and clusters of properties;
- People using nationally designated or regionally promoted footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways and others using areas of Open Access Land agreed under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000;
- Users of the local public rights of way (PRoW) network;
- Visitors at publicly accessible sites including, for example, gardens and designed landscapes, historic sites, and other visitor attractions or outdoor recreational facilities where the landscape or seascape is an important part of the experience;
- Users of outdoor sport and recreation facilities;
- Visitors staying at caravan parks or camp sites;
- Road users on recognised scenic or promoted tourist routes;
- Users of other roads;
- Rail passengers;
- People at their place of work.

Judging visual effects requires a methodical 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, in discussion with the competent authority and other stakeholders and interested parties, for a variety of reasons but most commonly because they represent views experienced by relevant groups of people.

A.5.1 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.

The assessment of the value of views is summarised in Table A8 below. These criteria are provided for guidance only.

Table A8: Factors Considered in assessing the Value Attached to Views

Value	Criteria
High	<p>Views from nationally (and in some cases internationally) known viewpoints, which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have some form of planning designation; or • are associated with internationally or nationally designated landscapes or important heritage assets; or • are promoted in sources such as maps and tourist literature; or • are linked with important and popular visitor attractions where the view forms a recognised part of the visitor experience; or • have important cultural associations. <p>Also may include views judged by assessors to be of high value.</p>
Medium	<p>Views from viewpoints of some importance at regional or local levels, which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have some form of local planning designation associated with locally designated landscapes or areas of equivalent landscape quality; or • are promoted in local sources; or • are linked with locally important and popular visitor attractions where the view forms a recognised part of the visitor experience; or • have important local cultural associations. <p>Also may include views judged by the assessors to be of medium value.</p>
Low	<p>Views from viewpoints which, although they may have value to local people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have no formal planning status; or • are not associated with designated or otherwise high quality landscapes; or • are not linked with popular visitor attractions; or • have no known cultural associations. <p>Also may include views judged by the assessors to be of low value.</p>

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.



The susceptibility of different groups of viewers is assessed with reference to the guidance in Table A9 below. However, as noted in GLVIA3 *"this division is not black and white and in reality there will be a gradation in susceptibility to change"*. Therefore the susceptibility of each group of people affected is considered for each project and assessments are included in the relevant text in the report.

Table A9: Visual Receptor Susceptibility to Change

Susceptibility	Criteria
High	Residents; People engaged in outdoor recreation where their attention is likely to be focused on the landscape and on particular views; Visitors to heritage assets or other attractions where views of the surroundings are an important part of the experience; Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by the residents.
Medium	Travellers on scenic routes where the attention of drivers and passengers is likely to be focused on the landscape and on particular views. People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation, which may involve appreciation of views e.g. users of golf courses.
Low	People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation, which does not involve appreciation of views; People at their place of work whose attention is focused on their work Travellers, where the view is incidental to the journey.

Defining Sensitivity

The sensitivity of visual receptors is defined in terms of the relationship between the value of views and the susceptibility of the different receptors to the proposed change. Figure A4 below summarises the nature of the relationship; it is not formulaic and only indicates general categories of sensitivity. Judgements are made on merit about each visual receptor, with the table below only serving as a guide. Table A10 sets down the main categories that may occur but again it is not comprehensive and other combinations may occur.

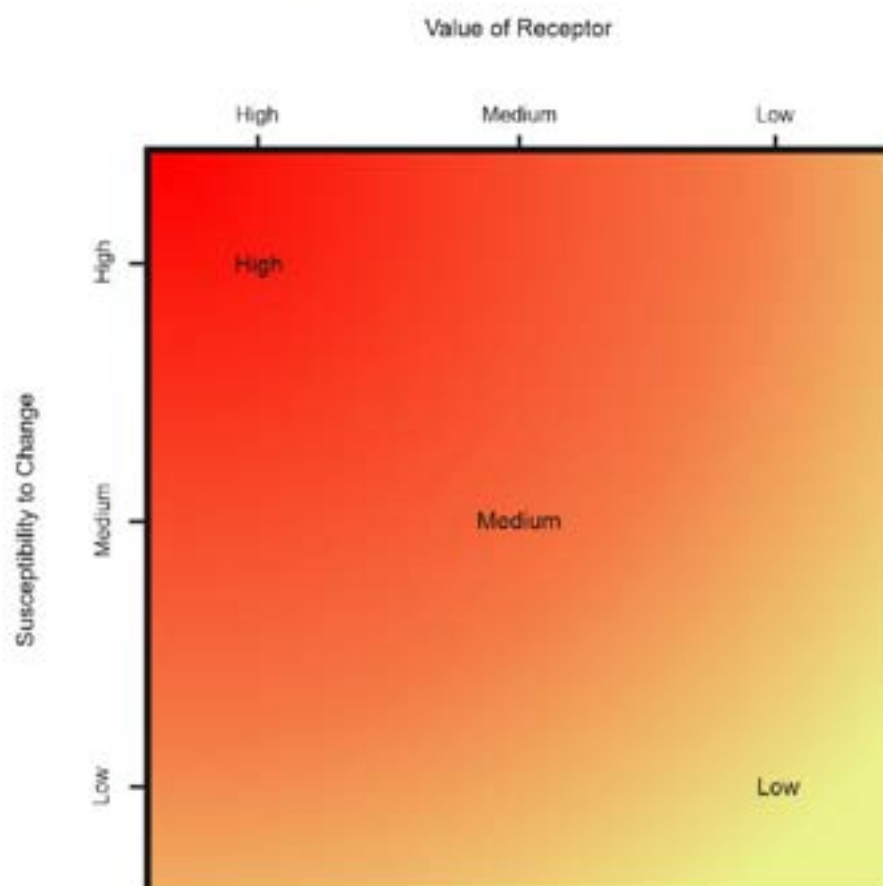
Table A10: Example Levels of Sensitivity defined by Value and Susceptibility of Visual Receptors

Sensitivity	Criteria
High	The visual receptor group is highly susceptible to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of high value OR The visual receptor group has a medium level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of high value OR The visual receptor group is highly susceptible to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the medium level.
Medium	The visual receptor group is highly susceptible to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the low level OR



Sensitivity	Criteria
	The visual receptor group has a medium level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the medium level OR The visual receptor group has a low level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the high level.
Low	The visual receptor group has a medium level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the low level OR The visual receptor group has a low level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the medium level OR The visual receptor group has a low level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the low level.

Figure A4: Levels of Sensitivity Defined by Value and Susceptibility of Visual Receptor Groups



A.5.2 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.

The above criteria are summarised in the Table A11 below.

Table A11: Magnitude of Visual Change: Size/Scale of Change

Category	Criteria
Large visual change	The proposed development will cause a complete or large change in the view, resulting from the loss of important features in or the addition of significant new ones, to the extent that this will substantially alter the composition of the view and the visual amenity it offers.
Medium visual change	The proposed development will cause a clearly noticeable change in the view, resulting from the loss of features or the addition of new ones, to the extent that this will alter to a moderate degree the composition of the view and the visual amenity it offers. Views may be partial/intermittent.
Small visual change	The proposed development will cause a perceptible change in the view, resulting from the loss of features or the addition of new ones, to the extent that this will partially alter the composition of the view and the visual amenity it offers. Views may be partial only.
Negligible visual change	The proposed development will cause a barely perceptible change in the view, resulting from the loss of features or the addition of new ones, to the extent that this will barely alter the composition of the view and the visual amenity it offers. Views may be glimpsed only.
No change	The proposed development will cause no change to the view.

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, and consideration of the criteria in Table A12 below. Representative viewpoints are used as 'sample' points to assess the typical change experienced by different groups of visual receptors at different distances and directions from the proposed development. The geographical extent of the visual change is judged for each group of receptors: for example, people using a particular route or public amenity, drawing on the viewpoint assessments, plus information about the distribution of that particular group of people in the Study Area.

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.

Thus, low levels of change identified at representative viewpoints may be extensive or limited in terms of the geographical area they are apparent from: for example, a view of the proposed development from elevated Access Land may be widely visible from much or all of the accessible area or may be confined to a small proportion of the area. Similarly, a view from a public footpath may be visible from a single isolated viewpoint, or over a prolonged stretch of the route. Community views may be experienced from a small number of dwellings or affect numerous residential properties.

Table A12: Magnitude of Visual Change: Geographical Extent of Change

Category	Description
Large extent of visual change	The proposed development is seen by the group of receptors in many locations across the Study Area or from the majority of a linear route and/or by large numbers of viewers; or the effect on the specific view(s) is extensive.
Medium extent of visual change	The proposed development is seen by the group of receptors from a medium number of locations across the Study Area or from a medium part of a linear route and/or by a medium number of viewers; or the effect on the specific view is moderately extensive.
Small extent of visual change	The proposed development is seen by the group of receptors at a small number of locations across the Study Area or from only limited sections of a linear route and/or by a small number of viewers; or the effect on a specific view is small.
Negligible extent of visual change	The proposed development is either not visible in the Study Area or is seen by the receptor group at only one or two locations or from a very limited section of a linear route and/or by only a very small number of receptors; or the effect on the specific view is barely discernible.

Duration and Reversibility of Change

The duration of the visual change at viewpoints is categorised in Table A13 below, which considers whether views will be permanent and irreversible or temporary and reversible.

Table 13: Duration and Reversibility

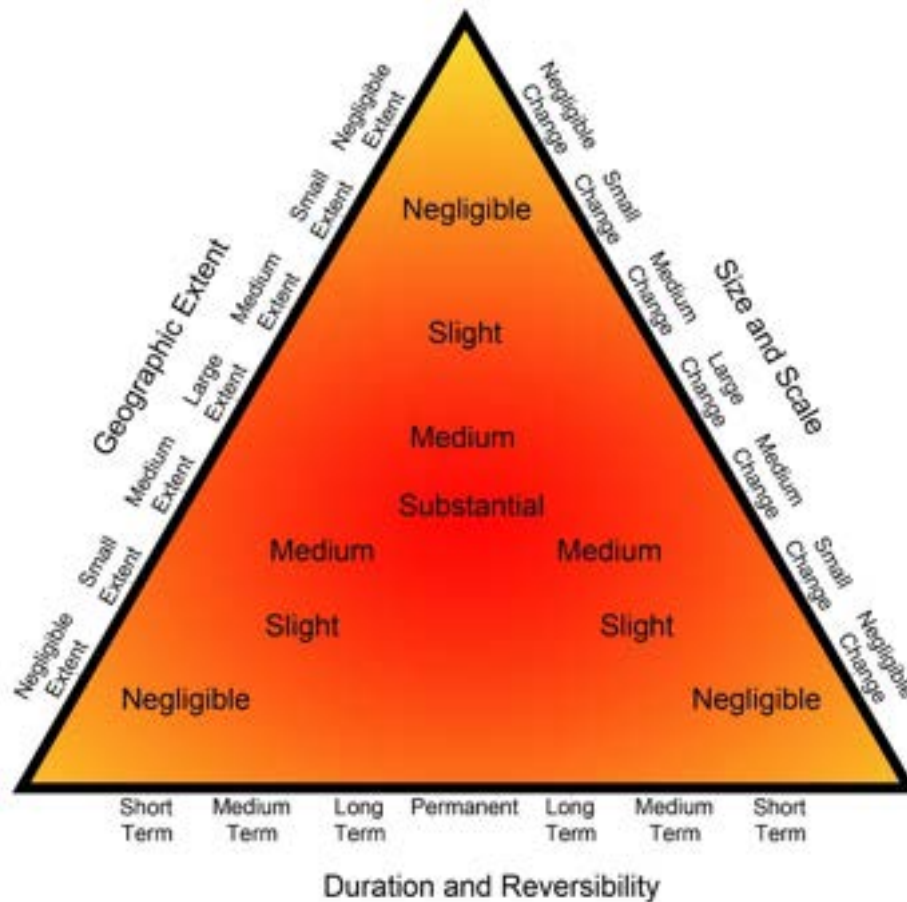
Category	Description
Permanent/ Irreversible	Change that will last for over 25 years and is deemed irreversible.
Long term reversible	Change that will endure for between 10 and 25 years and is potentially, or theoretically reversible.
Medium term reversible	Change that will last for up to 10 years and is wholly or partially reversible.
Temporary/ Short term reversible	Change that will last from 0 to 5 years and is reversible - includes construction effects.

Deciding on Overall Magnitude of Visual Change

The relationships between the three factors that contribute to assessment of the magnitude of visual effects are illustrated graphically, as a guide, in Figure A5, below. Various combinations are possible and the overall magnitude of each effect is judged on merit rather than by formulaic application of the relationships in the diagram.



Figure A5: Determining the Magnitude of Visual Change

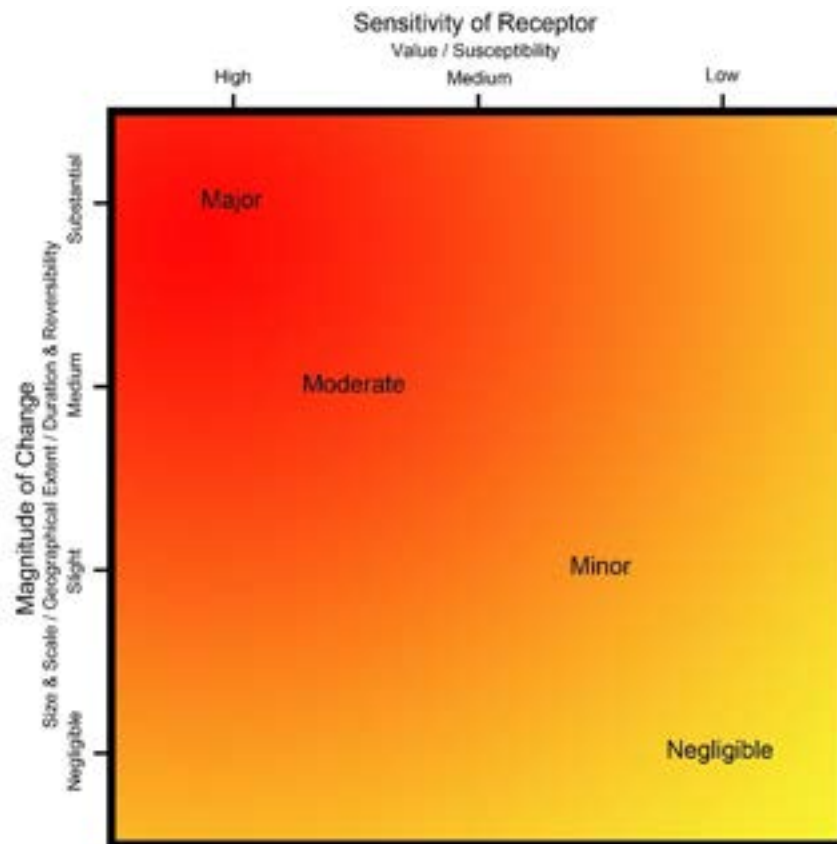


A.5.3 Assessment of Visual Effects and Significance

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 A6) 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.



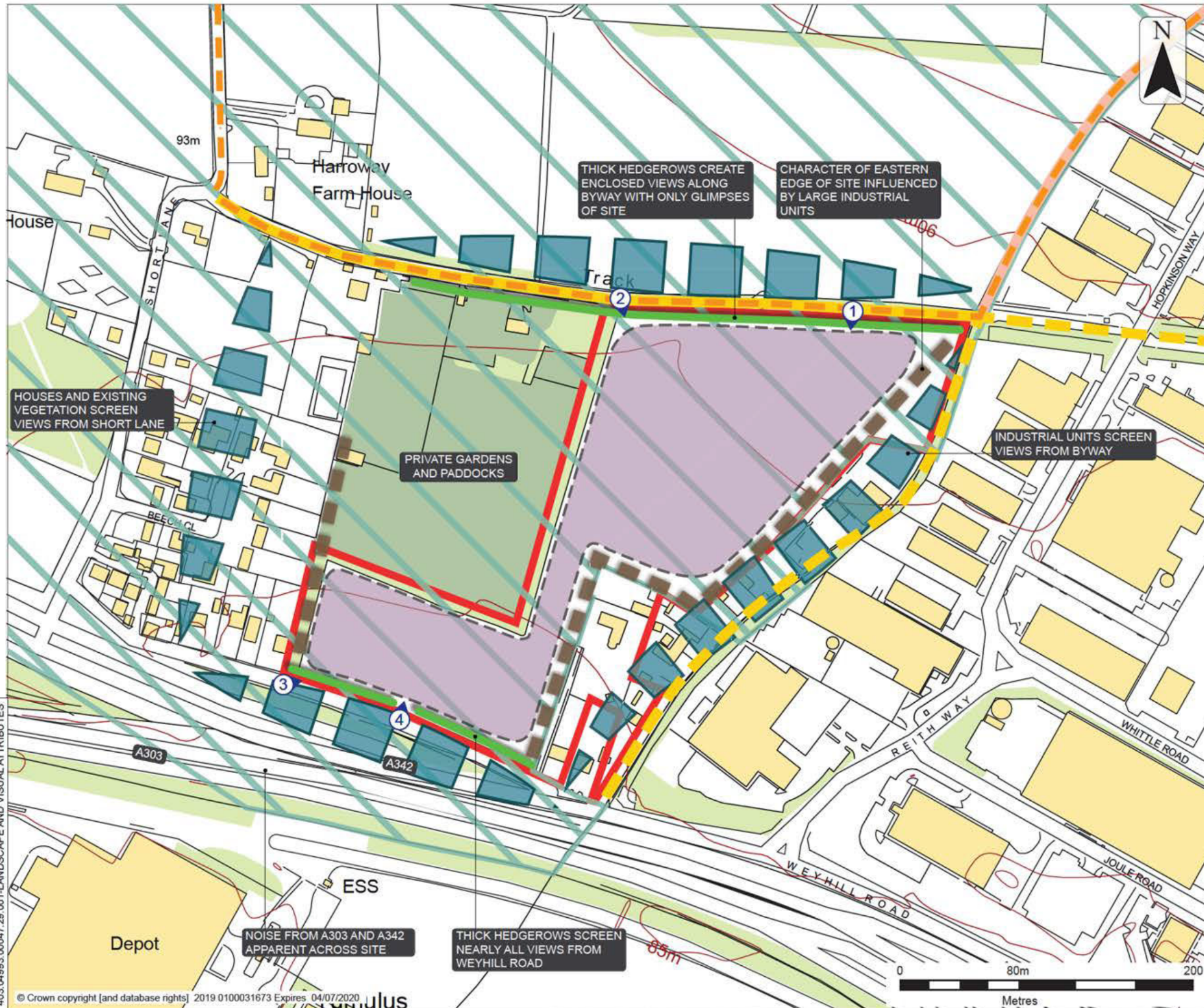
Figure A6: Assessment of Visual Effects








Making Sustainability Happen



- LEGEND**
- SITE BOUNDARY
 - LOCAL GAP
 - OPEN AREA OF WASTE GROUND
 - EXISTING THICK HEDGEROWS
 - VIEWS INTO SITE SCREENED
 - VISIBLE URBAN EDGE
 - LONG DISTANCE FOOTPATH - BRENDA PARKER WAY, ALSO KNOWN AS HARROW WAY IN LOCALITY OF THE SITE
 - BRIDLEWAY
 - BYWAY OPEN TO ALL TRAFFIC
 - RESTRICTED BYWAY
 - 1 VIEWPOINT



SLR

WEYHILL ROAD, ANDOVER

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ATTRIBUTES

WR-001

Scale 1:2500 @ A3

Date MARCH 2020

403.04993.00047.29.001-LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ATTRIBUTES



VIEWPOINT: 1 Looking south east across the site from Harrows Way.

PROJECTION: CYLINDRICAL
ENLARGEMENT FACTOR: 96% AT A1
VIEW AT COMFORTABLE ARM'S LENGTH
HORIZONTAL FIELD OF VIEW: 90°
TO BE PRINTED AT A1 FOR ASSESSMENT PURPOSES

DATE AND TIME OF PHOTOGRAPHY: 30/03/2022 AT 13:34
MAKE AND MODEL OF CAMERA: NIKON D5300
MAKE AND FOCAL LENGTH OF LENS: 35MM
DIRECTION OF VIEW: SOUTH EAST

TYPE 1 PHOTOGRAPHY

WINTER PHOTOGRAPHY

SLR

WEYHILL ROAD, ANDOVER

BARATT

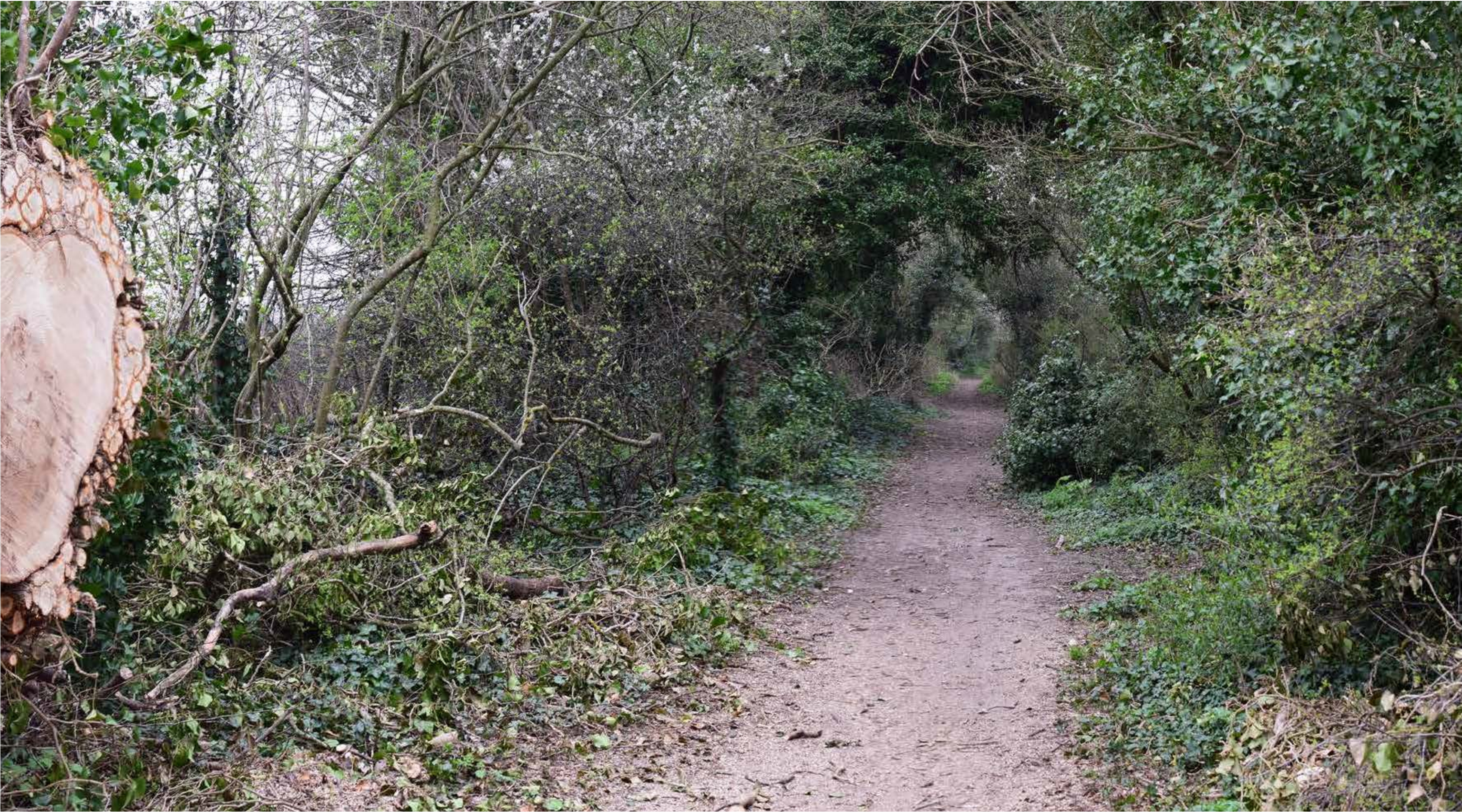
HOBBS

JOB NO. 403.04993.00047

DATE: APRIL 2022 DRAWN: EW CHECKED: EJ APPROVED: EJ

VIEWPOINT 1

DRAWING NO:WR-3



VIEWPOINT: 1 (CONTINUED) Looking south west across the site from Harrows Way.

PROJECTION: CYLINDRICAL
ENLARGEMENT FACTOR: 96% AT A1
VIEW AT COMFORTABLE ARM'S LENGTH
HORIZONTAL FIELD OF VIEW: 90°
TO BE PRINTED AT A1 FOR ASSESSMENT PURPOSES

DATE AND TIME OF PHOTOGRAPHY: 30/03/2022 AT 13:34
MAKE AND MODEL OF CAMERA: NIKON D5300
MAKE AND FOCAL LENGTH OF LENS: 35MM
DIRECTION OF VIEW: SOUTH WEST

TYPE 1 PHOTOGRAPHY

WINTER PHOTOGRAPHY

SLR

WEYHILL ROAD, ANDOVER

BARATT

HOBBS

JOB NO. 403.04993.00047

DATE: APRIL 2022 DRAWN: EW CHECKED: EJ APPROVED: EJ

VIEWPOINT 1

DRAWING NO:WR-4



VIEWPOINT: 2 Looking south east across the site from Harrows Way.

PROJECTION: CYLINDRICAL
ENLARGEMENT FACTOR: 96% AT A1
VIEW AT COMFORTABLE ARM'S LENGTH
HORIZONTAL FIELD OF VIEW: 90°
TO BE PRINTED AT A1 FOR ASSESSMENT PURPOSES

DATE AND TIME OF PHOTOGRAPHY: 30/03/2022 AT 13:38
MAKE AND MODEL OF CAMERA: NIKON D5300
MAKE AND FOCAL LENGTH OF LENS: 35MM
DIRECTION OF VIEW: SOUTH EAST

TYPE 1 PHOTOGRAPHY
WINTER PHOTOGRAPHY

SLR
WEYHILL ROAD, ANDOVER

JOB NO: 403 04993 00047
DATE: APRIL 2022 DRAWN: EW CHECKED: EJ APPROVED: EJ
VIEWPOINT 2 **DRAWING NO:WR-5**



VIEWPOINT: 2 (CONTINUED) Looking south west across the site from Harrows Way.

PROJECTION: CYLINDRICAL
ENLARGEMENT FACTOR: 96% AT A1
VIEW AT COMFORTABLE ARM'S LENGTH
HORIZONTAL FIELD OF VIEW: 90°
TO BE PRINTED AT A1 FOR ASSESSMENT PURPOSES

DATE AND TIME OF PHOTOGRAPHY: 30/03/2022 AT 13:38
MAKE AND MODEL OF CAMERA: NIKON D5300
MAKE AND FOCAL LENGTH OF LENS: 35MM
DIRECTION OF VIEW: SOUTH WEST

TYPE 1 PHOTOGRAPHY
WINTER PHOTOGRAPHY

SLR
WEYHILL ROAD, ANDOVER

JOB NO: 403 04993 00047
DATE: APRIL 2022 DRAWN: EW CHECKED: EJ APPROVED: EJ
VIEWPOINT 2 **DRAWING NO:WR-6**



VIEWPOINT: 3 Looking east from the boundary of the site with Weyhill Road.

PROJECTION: CYLINDRICAL
ENLARGEMENT FACTOR: 96% AT A1
VIEW AT COMFORTABLE ARM'S LENGTH
HORIZONTAL FIELD OF VIEW: 90°
TO BE PRINTED AT A1 FOR ASSESSMENT PURPOSES

DATE AND TIME OF PHOTOGRAPHY: 30/03/2022 AT 13:53
MAKE AND MODEL OF CAMERA: NIKON D5300
MAKE AND FOCAL LENGTH OF LENS: 35MM
DIRECTION OF VIEW: EAST

TYPE 1 PHOTOGRAPHY
WINTER PHOTOGRAPHY

SLR

WEYHILL ROAD, ANDOVER

JOB NO. 403.04993.00047
DATE: APRIL 2022 DRAWN: EW CHECKED: EJ APPROVED: EJ
VIEWPOINT 3

BARATT

DRAWING NO: WR-7



VIEWPOINT: 4 Looking north across the site from the pavement of Weyhill Road at the field gate.

PROJECTION: CYLINDRICAL
ENLARGEMENT FACTOR: 96% AT A1
VIEW AT COMFORTABLE ARM'S LENGTH
HORIZONTAL FIELD OF VIEW: 90°
TO BE PRINTED AT A1 FOR ASSESSMENT PURPOSES

DATE AND TIME OF PHOTOGRAPHY: 30/03/2022 AT 13:52
MAKE AND MODEL OF CAMERA: NIKON D5300
MAKE AND FOCAL LENGTH OF LENS: 35MM
DIRECTION OF VIEW: NORTH

TYPE 1 PHOTOGRAPHY
WINTER PHOTOGRAPHY

SLR

WEYHILL ROAD, ANDOVER

JOB NO. 403.04993.00047
DATE: APRIL 2022 DRAWN: EW CHECKED: EJ APPROVED: EJ
VIEWPOINT: 4

BARATT

DRAWING NO: WR-8

Appendix 4: Land at Homestead Farm, Weyhill Road Vision Document (Barratt Homes, December 2023)



VISION DOCUMENT

WEYHILL ROAD, ANDOVER

OCTOBER 2023



BARRATT
HOMES

CONTENTS

- 1.0 About Us
- 2.0 Introduction
- 3.0 Planning Context
- 4.0 Development Rationale
- 5.0 Development Concept
- 6.0 Deliverability

PROJECT TEAM

Planning Consultants:



Architectural Consultants:



Landscape Consultants:



Ecology Consultants:



TETRA TECH

Transport Consultants:



Drainage Consultants:



DAVID WILSON HOMES
WHERE QUALITY LIVES



BARRATT
HOMES

1.0

ABOUT US

At Barratt David Wilson Homes, we have been building high quality homes since 1958, and we are proud of our industry-leading reputation for quality, innovation and customer service. Over the last sixty years, we have built more than 450,000 homes, and millions of people have called a Barratt house their home.

CUSTOMER FIRST

We are the only major national housebuilder to achieve the HBF 5 Star Customer Satisfaction rating for fourteen consecutive years, with over 90% of customers stating that they would recommend us.

GREAT PLACES

We design and build great places that meet the highest standards, and that promote sustainable, healthy and happy living for our customers.

LEADING CONSTRUCTION

NHBC Pride in the Job campaign 2022: Our site managers won 98 Quality Awards in 2022 – more than any other housebuilder for the eighteenth year running

OUR PRIORITIES:



Customer first



Great places



Leading construction



Investing in our people

OUR PRINCIPLES:



Keeping people safe



Being a trusted partner



Building strong community relationships



Safeguarding the environment



Ensuring the financial health of our business

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS:

Formal partnership with



Raising the bar for nature-friendly housing



Winner of the NextGeneration Innovation Award 2022



Large Developer of the Year at the RESI Awards 2021

LOCAL CASE STUDIES:

Highgrove Gardens - Romsey

- In Test Valley BC
- Provision of 43 Homes
- Village green feel
- Provision of quality open space



Kings Chase - Ganger Farm, Romsey

- In Test Valley BC
- Provision of 275 Homes
- Provision of allotments
- Sports pitches and extensive open space



1.1 KEY DELIVERABLES



Delivery of up to 180 new homes
(including affordable provision)



Provision of 10%
Biodiversity Net Gain



Provision of quality open public space



A proposed landscape buffer on the
south western boundary of the site
provides screening



Support the employment of 558 people*



Provision of Sustainable drainage system
(SuDs)



Provision of Bat & Bird Boxes



All new homes are to be within 15-20
minutes' walk of local facilities and
transport services.



Generate £2,169,540 in tax revenue
including £203,302 in council tax
revenue*



Provision of cycle/pedestrian trails and
connections into existing footpath routes



Creation of Green Infrastructure,
new planting and hedgerows



Site is available and delivered by BDW
who are an HBF 5 Star Housebuilder

The site retains a semi urban fringe
character requiring a sensitive
approach to density, layout and
landscaping.

Perimeter areas will create a legible
and pedestrian permeable residential
layout that integrates onto Harrow
Way bridleway

Extensive Public Open Space and
provision of a large green space in

Accessible location within walking
and cycling distance of key services.

*Figures derived from HBF Economic Footprint Calculator (available online)

2.0

INTRODUCTION

Barratt David Wilson homes are pleased to present this updated Vision Document, updated in autumn 2023 to reflect the latest available information ahead of the anticipated Stage 2 Regulation 18 consultation on the Test Valley Local Plan 2040.

The document sets out the opportunity to develop the land North of Weyhill Hill Road in Andover for circa 180 homes. The updated masterplan reflects additional technical work on the site and feedback that has been received throughout Test Valley Local Plan process and is designed to ensure that the site is deliverable within an immediate five year period.

2.1 SITE LOCATION

- The site is located adjacent to the West Portway Industrial Estate, on the western edge of Andover.
- There is a bridleway that runs along the northern boundary that provides a direct walking and cycling route to Harrow Way Community School and West Portway Sports Academy.
- To the south the site is contained by a service road that links with Short Lane / Weyhill Road, beyond which is the A303 and Co-operative Food Distribution Centre.
- The site is discretely located within the landscape and accessible, being situated on a public transport corridor and within comfortable walking and cycling distance of key services and facilities.



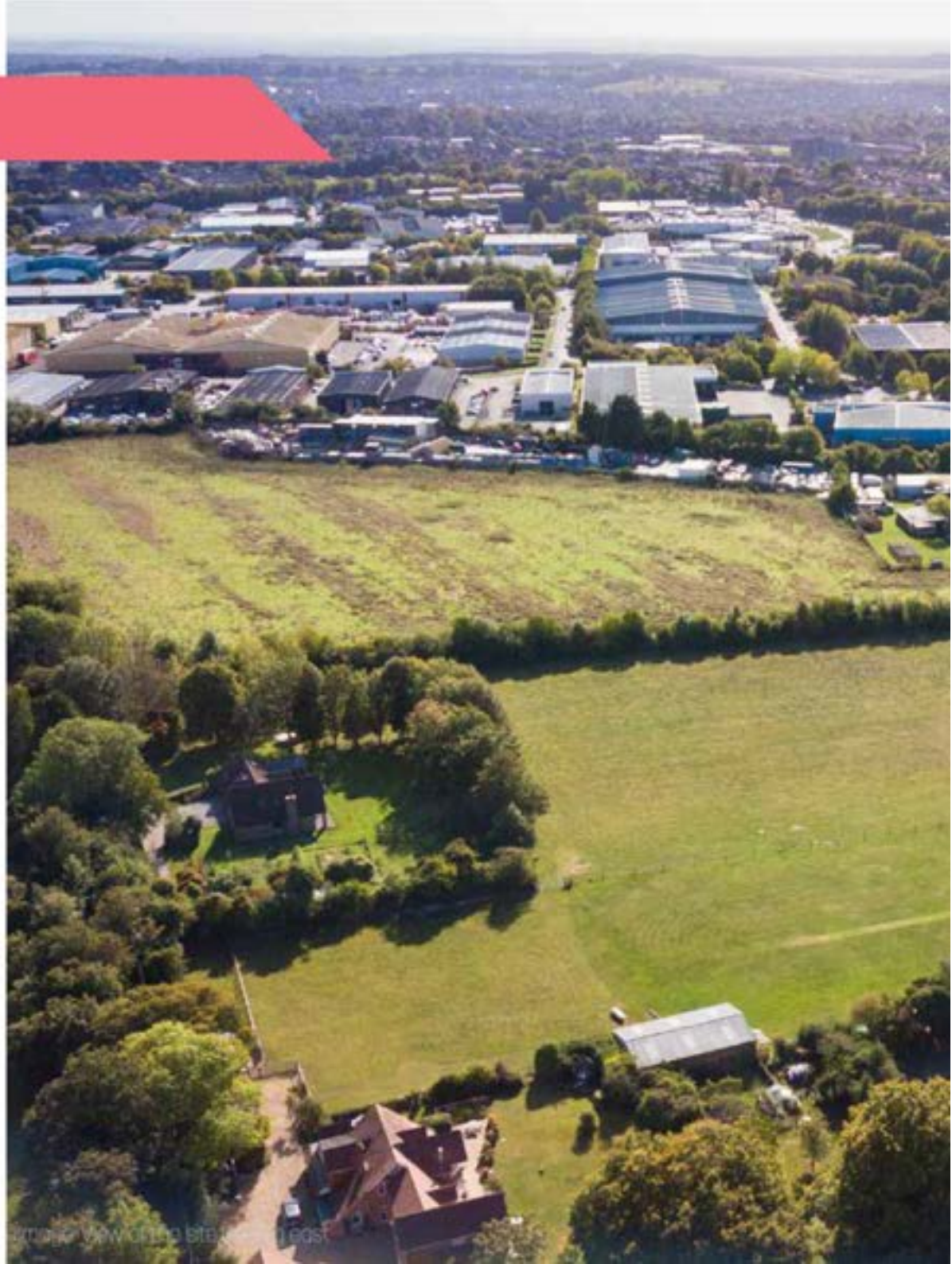
2.2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site comprises rough grassland and weeds to the south and east.

There are strong hedgerows on all sides of the site, but tall industrial buildings on the edge of Andover are visible over much of the site, as well as glimpses of residential properties to the west.

The site comprises gently sloping land, rising to its northern boundary that meets the treelined ridge and 'Harrow Way' bridleway. It also includes three residential properties in the south east corner. A second bridleway runs in a north south direction through the industrial area to the east, although views across the site are almost entirely screened by buildings and boundaries.

The site is not within an area designated as of international, local or ecological importance. There are no listed buildings or Conservation Areas on or adjacent to the site.



Aerial view of the site from the east

2.3 SITE & SURROUNDING - PHOTOGRAPHS



Master map of view point locations



Existing Field access along Weyhill Road



End of gardens facing eastwards



View looking north



View of eastern boundary



View of southern boundary with distribution centre beyond



View along Harrow Way looking west



View of properties Hedgerows and Southmead along Weyhill Road (to the west of the site)



View of Bus stop on Weyhill Road (A342)



View looking towards southern boundary, adjacent Footner Close



View of field adjacent to western boundary towards the distribution centre



View looking towards south-east corner along Weyhill Road



View of south west boundary



View looking west along Weyhill Road



View of bungalows adjacent to south-east boundary

3.0

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in September 2023, provides guidance for Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) in drawing up development plans. The NPPF establishes a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' which plan-making means that all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects.

With specific regard to housing delivery, the NPPF also seeks to boost significantly the supply of housing. This includes a requirement to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area.

LPAs are expected to identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability. Policies are expected to identify a supply of:

- a) specific, deliverable sites for years one to five of the plan period, and
- b) specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 of the plan.

In addition to the NPPF, the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides guidance for the LPAs on the factors that should be considered when assessing the suitability of sites and broad locations for development. A site can be considered suitable if it would provide an appropriate location for development when considered against relevant constraints and their potential to be mitigated.

The identification of Land at Weyhill Road, Andover and its allocation for residential development would be consistent with national planning policies and guidance with the following factors being particularly relevant:

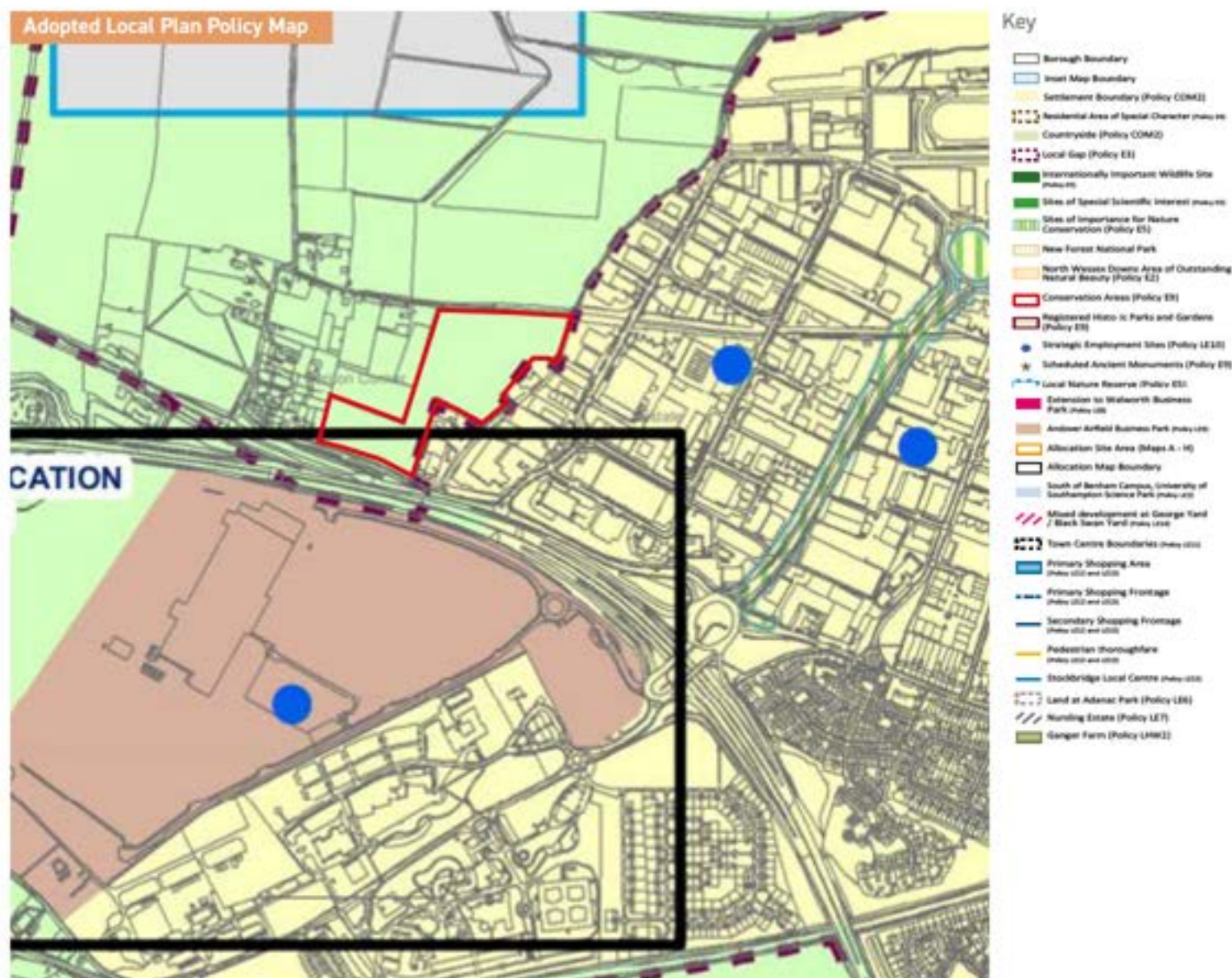
- *The site is directly adjacent to (and partially within) the settlement boundary of Andover which is identified as a Major Centre and classed at the highest level within the settlement hierarchy.*
- *The site is free of major constraints and the site-specific constraints which are present can be effectively addressed through detailed design.*
- *The site is available now and can deliver homes within the initial 5-year period of the new Local Plan which would provide a significant boost to housing delivery, and particularly the supply of much needed affordable housing in the area.*
- *Development of the site is achievable and viable, being able to meet site specific infrastructure requirements.*
- *The allocation of the site would be consistent with the support in the NPPF for planning for larger scale development, including by significant extensions to towns, provided they are well located, designed and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (NPPF paragraph 73).*

3.1 ADOPTED TEST VALLEY LOCAL PLAN

The Development Plan comprises the Revised Local Plan DPD 2011-2029 (Adopted January 2016) and the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (Adopted October 2013).

The adopted Local Plan classifies Andover as a "Major Centre" owing to the full range and number of services available within the town and the high level of accessibility by public transport. The Local Plan focusses development within this settlement – 60% of housing in Test Valley was allocated to Andover within the Local Plan period 2011 - 2029 (6,444 out of 10,584 houses according to Policy COM1).

As an accessible and relatively unconstrained extension to Andover the Land at Weyhill Road Andover is considered to be a suitable location for a new sustainable neighbourhood. It will be noted from the Policies map that part of the site is within the settlement of Andover. The remaining sections are directly adjacent to the settlement boundary. The site is within a Local Gap policy.



3.2 EMERGING PLANNING POLICY

A new Local Plan is being prepared and seeks to cover a plan period to 2040. The previous consultation (on the Draft Local Plan Regulation 18 Stage 1 Issues and Options) was undertaken in early 2022.

The Stage 1 Issues and Options document confirmed that the market towns of Andover and Romsey are the largest settlements in the Borough, with the widest range and number of facilities. The proposed new Settlement Hierarchy places these two settlements at 'Tier 1' of the hierarchy (Draft Policy SSP1) and the section covering the Spatial Strategy stated that these towns "are at the core of our spatial strategy and will continue to be a focus for development" (paragraph 3.10).

The emerging Spatial Strategy is based on the assessment undertaken by the Spatial Strategy Topic Paper (February 2022) which recommended a strategy based on a blend of options which concentrates development at key economic or employment centres (Option C), focuses development in the towns (Option D) and distributes development in order to support the largest settlements within the borough (Option E).

Land at Weyhill Road is adjacent to the settlement of Andover and meets the objectives set out within the emerging Spatial Strategy, with the proximity to one of the Borough's key employment areas being a particular benefit.

Test Valley Context Map



3.3 STRATEGIC HOUSING & ECONOMIC LAND AVAILABILITY

The site has been identified within the SHELAA for a number of years, with the most recent assessment made in 2021. The site is listed as available and achievable for a residential development of circa 180 residential dwellings within 4 - 10 years, dependent on its inclusion as an allocation within the forthcoming Local Plan. BDW will carefully consider its location with a local gap, and proximity to commercial uses.



Test Valley BC - SHELAA Plan

4.0

DEVELOPMENT RATIONALE

Utilising the objectives of the Test Valley Draft Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal, BDW have assessed the suitability of the Weyhill, Andover development site in sustainability terms. It is clear that the site is well placed to provide a truly sustainable development, with significant benefits brought to the local area including new high quality housing for a range of local people to meet their needs, high quality open spaces, a biodiversity net gain and high quality links to the surrounds to encourage sustainable transport.

Key to Appraisal

Strongly positive	++
Positive	+
Mixed performance	+/-
Negative	-
Strongly negative	--
Depends on implementation	!
Uncertain	?
No effect	0

4.1 SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

Sustainability Objective	Performance	Commentary
1. Ensure everyone has the opportunity to live in an appropriate home that meets their needs.	++	The proposed development site could accommodate approximately 180 new residential dwellings of a range of sizes, types and tenures to cater for a variety of people's needs, including a provision of affordable housing.
2. Ensure the local economy is thriving with high and stable levels of growth, whilst supporting productivity and the promotion of a diverse economy, with the availability of a skilled workforce.	+	The proposed development site would contribute to the local economy both through the construction of the development, and post-construction. The proposed development would result in the creation of jobs and wages during the construction phase and will contribute to the overall longer term prosperity of the area through additional expenditure of future residents and additional skills brought to the local workforce in perpetuity.
3. Maintain and improve access to services, facilities and other infrastructure, whilst improving the efficiency and integration of transport networks and the availability and utilisation of sustainable modes of travel.	+	The proposed concept masterplan incorporates connections to the adjacent bridleway network for convenient and attractive cycle and pedestrian routes to local services and facilities, encouraging a modal shift to sustainable transport. Within the development, new landscaped pedestrian and cycle routes within the neighbourhood will provide traffic free attractive routes, including links to bus stops adjacent to the site.
4. Encourage the efficient use of land and conserve soil resources.	+/-	The majority of the site is designated as Grade 2, with some areas designated as Grade 3a. As such the site is good quality agricultural land, however, the loss of these soils needs to be balanced against the significant housing needs of the District. The site also presents the opportunity for incidental extraction in line with implementing the development which would be achievable in principle.
5. Conserve and, where possible, enhance the water environment and ensure the sustainable management of water resources.	+	The site will incorporate a Sustainable Urban Drainage System with attenuation basins that will improve water quality of run off from the site. Any forthcoming proposals will incorporate nitrate mitigation to ensure water quality impacts in the Solent are mitigated. Any forthcoming proposals for residential development will be built in line with best practice guidance to conserve water use.
6. Seek to avoid and reduce vulnerability to the risk of flooding and the resulting detrimental effects to the public, economy and environment.	+	The site will incorporate a Sustainable Urban Drainage System that will minimise run-off rates at the site to greenfield rates, as well as ensuring that the proposals do not increase flood risk elsewhere. The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore well suited for residential development in flood risk terms.
7. Maintain and, where possible, enhance air quality.	0	The proposed residential development is unlikely to lead to any impacts or changes to air quality.
8. Conserve and, where possible, enhance the Borough's landscape, townscape and settlement character.	+/-	The proposed development will inevitably lead to some landscape impacts; however, the site is well contained from external views which will minimise impacts. To the south and east of the site, the landscape is heavily characterised by large commercial buildings of a significant scale and the A303 trunk route connecting London and the M3 with the West Country.
9. Conserve and, where possible, enhance the historic environment and the significance of heritage assets.	0	The proposed residential development site is not located within proximity to heritage assets as to impact upon them. However trial trenches have identified underground circular archaeological features. There will be no impact on this as the southern part of the will be undeveloped.
10. Conserve and, where possible, enhance biodiversity and habitat connectivity.	++	The proposed development concept incorporates open spaces and green infrastructure to maintain and enhance biodiversity and habitats, as well as recreational facilities such as walkways to reduce recreational demand on protected ecological sites beyond the site.
11. Support the delivery of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.	+	The proposed residential development will incorporate best practice measures in line with relevant guidance to mitigate climate change impacts, including being built to Part L Building Regulations to ensure the best standard of performance. This can be enhanced, subject to implementation, to incorporate additional measures.
12. Seek to maintain and improve the health and wellbeing of the population.	++	The proposed development will include attractive, biodiverse publicly accessible spaces including focal spaces and a large public open space at its centre to improve the environment and encourage healthy lifestyles.

4.2 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- The visual envelope of any development at the site would be extremely limited due to the strong screening effect of the ridgeline, heavily treed western and southern boundary and industrial estate to the east. The site has a strong urban fringe character, due to the prominence of large scale commercial buildings and associated activities and the traffic noise from the A303 to the south.
- Whilst the site comprises an open field, the heavily screened site boundaries, strong visual influence of the adjacent commercial areas and background noise from the nearby A roads, there is a strong sense this site is within a settled area. Consequently the site has a medium to low susceptibility to residential development and is not considered to perform a 'gap' function.
- The site is of low scenic quality and is not located within or adjacent to an area designated as of landscape sensitivity. It is located within the 'North Andover Plateau (LCA9A)', as defined in the Test Valley Landscape Character Assessment (2018).
- The countryside to the west and north of the site is characterised by large arable fields, woodland copses, dry river gravel valleys and dispersed farms and villages. To the south and east of the site the immediate area is heavily influenced by large scale buildings and the A303.



4.3 VISUAL IMPACT

- The site is visually enclosed by strong hedgerows. A further degree of enclosure is provided by existing buildings to the west and east, as referred to above. There are no public rights of way within the site.
- Views are therefore limited to glimpses from Harrow Way, to the north, and also glimpsed views from Weyhill Road, to the south. Residential receptors have restricted views into the site.
- For the above reasons it is considered the site has capacity for residential development, since the site is already strongly influenced by built development and both landscape and visual effects would be localised due to the visually enclosed nature of the site.
- Whilst the site is within a 'Local Gap' designation the justification for a gap has significantly diminished due to the prominence of the distribution centre immediately to the south and background noise associated with commercial uses and road traffic.

Whilst the site is within a Local Gap the functionality of, and therefore justification for, the gap at this location is significantly diminished by the prominence of industrial development to the east, the distribution centre immediately to the south and background noise associated with commercial uses and road traffic (A303). The site is already experienced as part of the urban envelope as a result of the influence of surrounding uses. It is noted that the collection of dwellings at Penton Corner cannot reasonably be considered to be a settlement in their own right. They, therefore, do not form part of the settlements referenced in the Gap Policy which the policy seeks to keep separate from the edge of Andover. The main intention of the Gap Policy is to separate Andover from the historic settlements of Penton Grafton / Mewsey (see description in Policy E3: Local Gaps Topic Paper) and in so doing protect sensitive open landscapes. Given the enclosed nature of the site it would be possible to develop this site, without increasing the intervisibility of settlement edges. The gap between settlements would not, therefore, be compromised by the release of the site for development.

CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES



4.4 BIODIVERSITY

The site comprises of a semi-improved neutral grassland field with woodland, scrub and hedgerow boundaries. The sites grasslands and scrub are of lower ecological value and there loss is not considered to be of significant ecological impact.

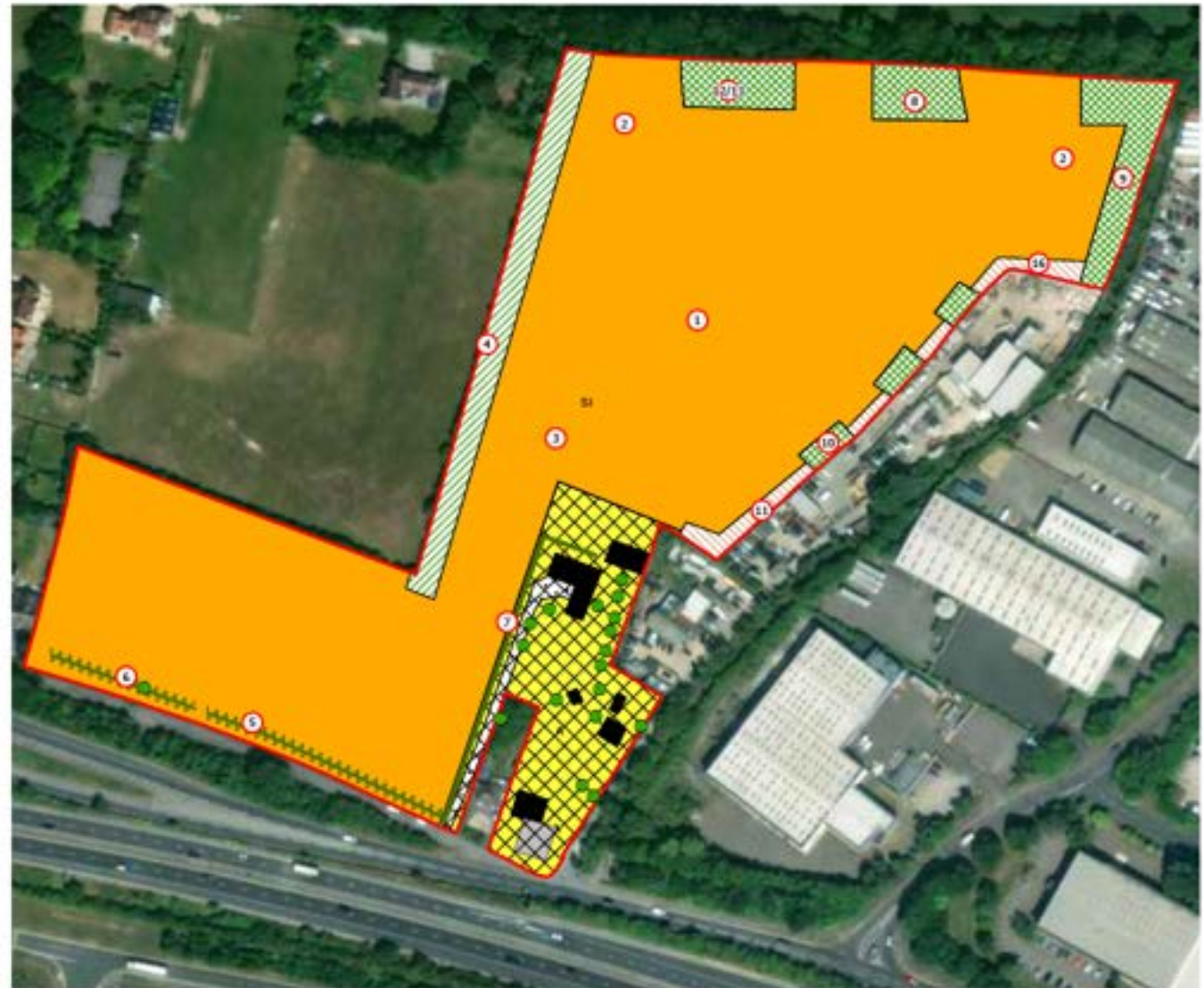
The ecologically valuable habitats species rich hedgerows and broadleaved woodland are to be retained within the proposals.

To address increase nutrients arising from the development, a nutrient assessment is to be carried out to determine the extent of the mitigation required for the proposals to become 'nutrient neutral'.

The proposals will address the site constraints by the Mitigation Hierarchy with avoidance, mitigation and compensatory measures designed into the proposals.

AVOIDANCE, MITIGATION AND ENHANCEMENT

- Retainment and strengthening of the of the ecological valuable habitats on site including the hedgerow and woodland boundaries;
- Adequate buffers along the hedgerow and woodland boundaries;
- Sensitive lighting scheme;
- Landscape design to incorporate native species and creation of species rich grasslands to increase the overall ecological value on site.



Legend

Site boundary	Neutral grassland - semi-improved	Hardstanding	Scattered tree
No Access during Ecological Appraisal	Tall ruderal	Bare ground	Target note
Broadleaved woodland - plantation	Amenity grassland	Intact hedge - native species-rich	
Scrub - dense/continuous	Buildings	Intact hedge - species-poor	

4.5 TRANSPORT AND ACCESS

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND ACCESSIBILITY

The site is located off Weyhill Road which provides direct access to c.6 residential properties (4 to the west and 2 to the east of the site) as well as a small residential development of 10 dwellings which also connects to Short Lane. Weyhill Road runs parallel to the A342 Weyhill Road and forms a priority junction with Short Lane to the west and is a dead end to the east with the road culminating in a series of bollards. The site is approximately 3km west of Andover Railway Station and 3.2km west of Andover Town Centre.

As aforementioned, the site is bound by residential properties and greenfields to the west, Weyhill Road to the south, a Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) and agricultural fields to the north and industrial uses to the east. The existing site takes access from Weyhill Road, which runs parallel to the A342 Weyhill Road. The existing site conditions and access are shown within Photograph 1 and 2.

Weyhill Road is a cul-de-sac with vehicular access from the west via a priority junction with Short Lane and provides access to c.6-16 residential properties and the existing field access. Weyhill Road measures c.6m in width and is a tarmac road with no white lining present (after the junction), suitable to provide two-way vehicle movement. To the east, Weyhill Road connects to the A342 Weyhill Road, however, this allows for pedestrian access only as there are bollards in place to prevent vehicles accessing the road, as shown in Photograph 3.

A pedestrian footway which measures between c.1.5m-2m is provided along the northern side of the carriageway which provides connection from the footways along Short Lane (to the west) to the shared footway/cycleway on the A342 (to the east). The existing vegetation across the site frontage is overgrown and narrows the available footway width. Once the vegetation is removed or cut back, the footway would appear to measure c.2m in width.

Therefore, it is evident that the site is well situated in terms of both the local and strategic highways networks.



CYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE



As aforementioned, there are shared footway/cycleways provided to both the east and west of the site which provide a connection towards local facilities within Weyhill and Andover

Figure 1 shows an off-road cycle lane in the form of the shared foot/cycleway, starts to the west of the site and continues to the east. At present Weyhill Road across the site frontage is an on-road cycle route between the two shared paths

A mixture of on and off-road cycle tracks are available from the site which provide a direct connection into Andover and towards local facilities, including Andover Railway Station. The cycle routes are all under the 8km which CIHT states 80% of cycle journeys are under and therefore all local facilities have the potential to be accessed by bike.

Figure 1: Local cycle routes



BUS SERVICES



There are a number of bus stops within the vicinity of the site ('Short Lane' and 'Weyhill Road') located along the A342 Weyhill Road. The closest bus stop is 'Short Lane' Eastbound which is accessed via a cut through from Weyhill Road.

The bus stops are in the form of a flagpole, with 'Short Lane' eastbound stop having a sheltered seating area.

Bus stop: Short Lane east bound



Bus stop: Short Lane west bound



Bus stop: Weyhill Road west bound



RAIL SERVICES



Andover Railway Station is circa 2.8km from the site or and can be accessed on foot (33 ½ minute walk), on bike (9 ½ minute cycle) or by bus service 8 (9-minutes). Andover Railway Station provides hourly services towards London Waterloo (1 hour 10 minutes journey time), Exeter St Davids (2 hours 10 minutes journey time) and Salisbury (20 minutes journey time). These services also call at Basingstoke, Woking, Tisbury, Gillingham and Overton

Andover Railway Station



4.5 TRANSPORT AND ACCESS

WALKING CONNECTIONS

There are a number of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within the vicinity of the site which are shown in Figure 2

As shown within Figure 2, the 188/10/1 By-Way Open to All Traffic runs along the sites northern boundary and provides a connection to Bridleway 005/40/1 which provides a route north towards Foxcotte Lane, Restricted Byway 005/63a/1 which provides a route east through Portway Business Park and Restricted Byway 005/64/1 which runs south to the A342.

ACCESSIBILITY

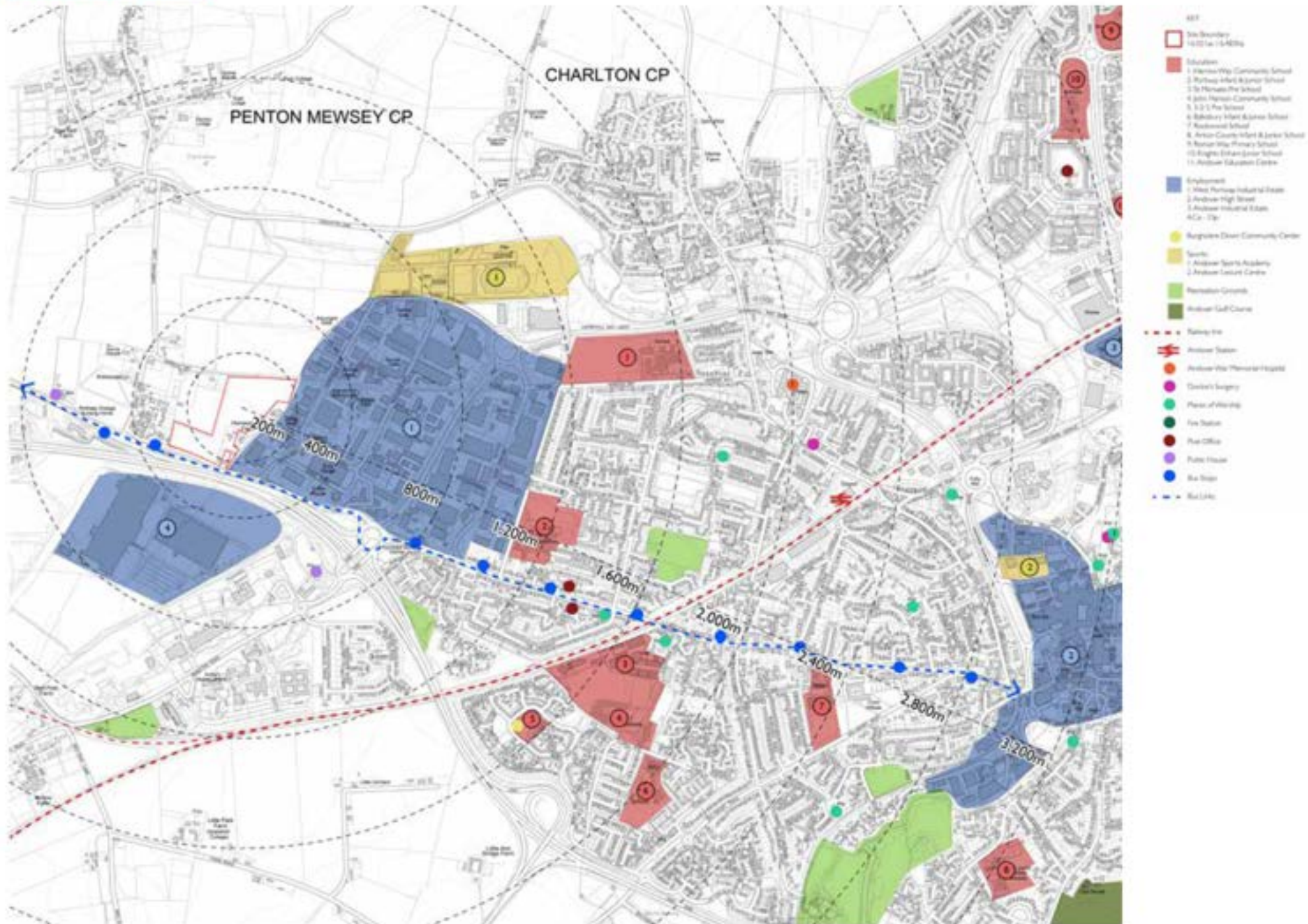
The site is located within a reasonable location with regards to accessibility and local amenities in Andover. The table below outlines the local amenities/facilities within walking and cycling distance from the site with walking and cycling speeds based upon the Chartered Institution for Highways and Transportation (CIHT) guidance. For reference, all distances have been measured from the site. As shown in Table below, there are a number of amenities and facilities within walking and cycling distance from the site, with all facilities accessible within 3.7km (44-minute walk and 12 ½ minute cycle).



Local Amenities	Distance from site Acce	Walking (80m per minute)	Cycling (250m per minute)
Short Lane Bus Stop (eastbound)	130m	1 ½ minutes	½ minute
Short Lane Bus Stop (westbound)	350m	4 minutes	1 minute
Portway Business Park (entrance)	400m	5 minutes	1 ½ minutes
A342 Weyhill Road Bus Stop (eastbound)	650m	7 ½ minutes	2 minutes
A342 Weyhill Road Bus Stop (westbound)	650m	7 ½ minutes	2 minutes
Andover Trade Park	650m	7 ½ minutes	2 minutes
Aldi	1km	12 minutes	3 ½ minutes
Weyhill Country Market	1.1km	13 minutes	3 ½ minutes
Andover Football Club	1.2km	14 ½ minutes	4 minutes
Puregym	1.4km	16 ½ minutes	4 ½ minutes

Weyhill Service Station	1.4km	16 ½ minutes	4 ½ minutes
Harrow Way Community School	2km	24 minutes	6 ½ minutes
Pharmacy	2.1km	25 minutes	7 minutes
John Hanson Community School	2.2km	26 minutes	7 ½ minutes
Rookwood School	2.6km	31 minutes	8 ½ minutes
Post Office	2.6km	31 minutes	8 ½ minutes
Andover Train Station	2.8km	33 ½ minutes	9 ½ minutes
Andover Town Centre	3.2km	38 minutes	10 ½ minutes
Riverside Bowl	3.3km	39 ½ minutes	11 minutes
Andover Leisure Centre	3.7km	44 minutes	12 ½ minutes
Andover College	3.7km	44 minutes	12 ½ minutes

FACILITIES PLAN





Weyhill Road Local Shops



Andover Hospital



Sports Academy



Harrow Way Community School



Andover Railway Station



Supermarket



Portway Junior and Infant School



Local Shops at The Drove



Area of employment, Portway Industrial Estate

4.6 FLOOD RISK

The site is predominantly greenfield in nature and covers an area of 5.5 ha. The proposed development of the site is currently envisaged to be for 180 residential dwellings.

Flood risk from all sources has been assessed using available data. The site is shown to be in Flood Zone 1 and to have a low potential for flooding from all sources except surface water flooding, where there is an area of 'Low', 'Medium' and 'High' risk along the southern boundary associated with the low laying area of the site. Therefore, the potential for flooding at the site is low from most sources, but there is a requirement to further assess, and, develop a strategy to manage the surface water as part of the proposed development.

- The NPPF aims to reduce flood risk through a sequential approach to development opportunities. The NPPF and accompanying Technical Guidance aims to ensure flood risks and the predicted effects of climate change have been taken into account and appropriate measures put in place to ensure that development is safe, where possible the flood risk overall is reduced and increased flood risk does not occur elsewhere.
- Under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 Hampshire County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority and is responsible for coordinating the management of local flood risk. As Lead Local Flood Authority for Hampshire, the County Council is in the process of preparing Surface Water Management Plans.
- The site is wholly located within Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk of flooding), where the principle of residential development is acceptable in terms of flood risk. In addition the majority of the site has a very low risk of surface water flooding, apart from a small area in the south.



4.7 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

About quarter of the agricultural element of the site is of 'good quality' and classified as Grade 2 with the remainder in Subgrade 3a. Whilst the land is classified as 'moderate to good quality' agricultural land this is widespread within the surrounding area. It will be noted that the construction of Andover Airfield Business Park resulted in the loss of far more moderate and good quality agricultural land than would be lost if the Weyhill Road site were developed.



4.8 ARCHAEOLOGY

A geophysical survey and trial trenching was been undertaken at this site. The geophysical survey identified that the site contains a high archaeological potential for possible Bronze Age funerary monuments identified in the southern part of the site from cropmark evidence.

Therefore a trial trenching was undertaken to establish what might be present underground. In conclusion, the evaluation identified archaeological resources in the southern part of the site which suggest the presence of a large circular feature, which may represent a late Neolithic henge and an undated field system. The circular feature survives as a substantial ring ditch and the truncated remains of a possible internal bank. The possible field system survives as shallow linear features in a rectangular layout.



5.1 OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

5.2 CONCEPT MASTERPLAN



KEY

- SITE BOUNDARY
- △ SITE ACCESS
- △ POTENTIAL SECONDARY ACCESS
- △ POTENTIAL PEDESTRIAN ACCESS
- EXISTING BRIDLEWAY
- PROPOSED BLOCKS
- PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN ROUTE
- FOCAL AREA
- PUBLIC OPEN SPACE
- NOISE BUFFER
- BRONZE AGE RING DITCH
- PROPOSED SUDS
- EXISTING TREES
- EXISTING PLANTING
- PROPOSED TREES
- PROPOSED PLANTING

This Concept Masterplan implements the design principles in this Vision Document and has the potential to deliver the following major benefits for Andover:

A community-led iterative approach to the masterplanning process will help ensure the site responds to local needs and the physical characteristics of the site. Through our vision and a detailed understanding of the natural and built context of the site the following principles have been identified:

Health and Well-Being



- Housing will be well designed and arranged into attractive sub-character areas that are respectful to the characteristics of each part of the site and the adjacent residential area
- A range of new homes providing for different sectors of the local community and facilitating access to high quality housing of a range of tenures inclining policy-compliant levels affordable housing.

Landscape Character



- The existing mature boundary hedgerows and tree belts will limit both short and longer distance views into the site from the north and from the A303 to the south.
- Where required, landscaping will be enhanced through the sympathetic use of native species, to fill existing gaps or strengthen boundaries.

Green Infrastructure



- Well landscaped and multi-functional green open spaces will be located towards the centre and at the south of the site, ensuring that all residents are in close proximity.
- The southern green open space will provide in situ preservation of the archaeological features, which will be enhanced through sensitive interpretative landscaping and signage.

Transport and Movement



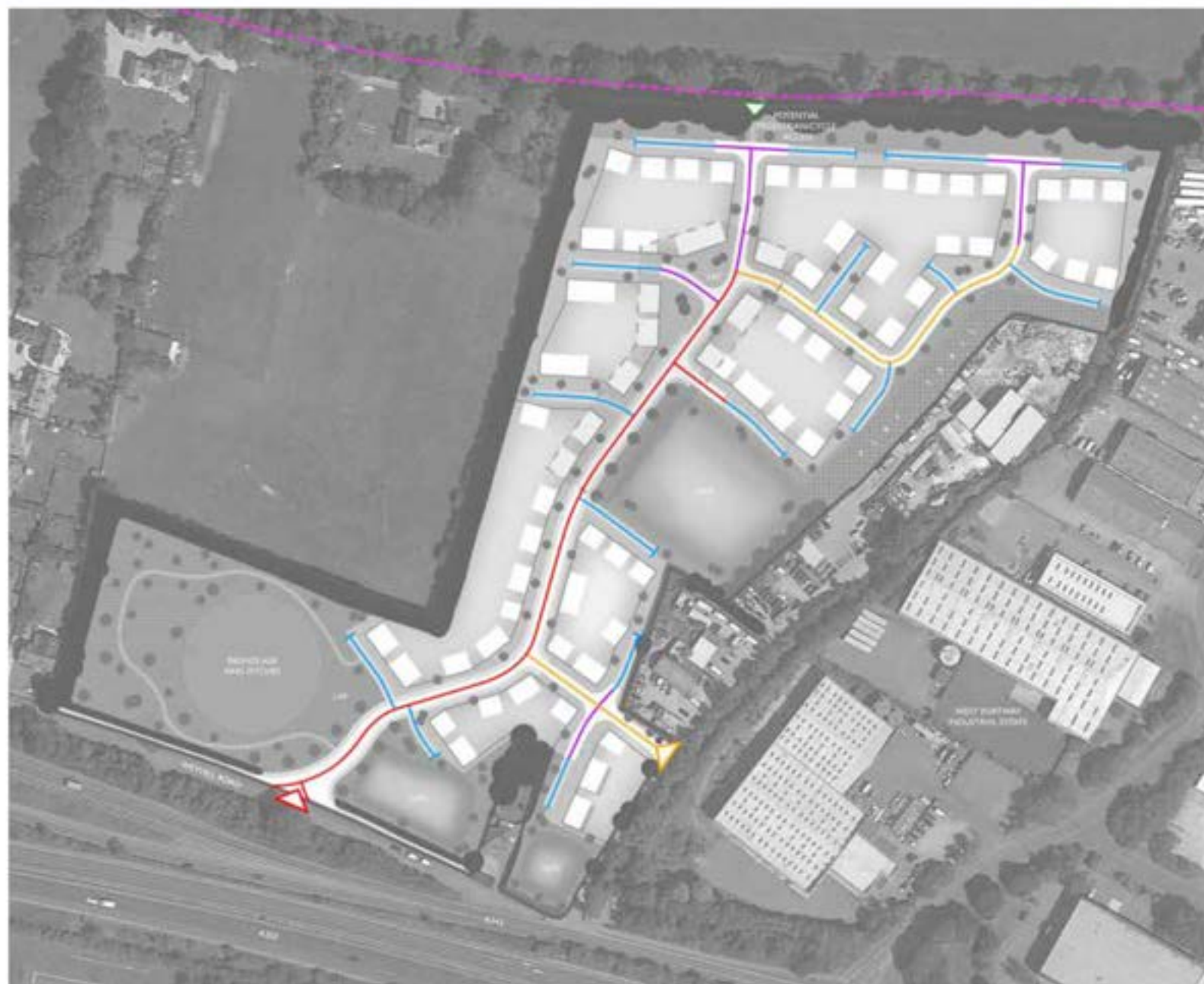
- To connect into the adjacent bridleway network for convenient and attractive cycle and pedestrian routes to key services and facilities and encourage modal shift.
- To provide landscaped pedestrian and cycle routes within the site to provide traffic free attractive links.
- The site retains an urban fringe character requiring a sensitive approach to density, layout and landscaping.

5.3 LANDSCAPE











KEY

- SITE BOUNDARY
- △ SITE ACCESS
- △ POTENTIAL SECONDARY ACCESS
- △ POTENTIAL PEDESTRIAN ACCESS
- EXISTING BRIDLEWAY
- PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN ROUTE
- FOCAL AREA
- PUBLIC OPEN SPACE
- NOISE BUFFER
- BRONZE AGE RING DITCH
- PROPOSED SUDS
- EXISTING TREES
- EXISTING PLANTING
- PROPOSED TREES
- PROPOSED PLANTING



KEY

-  SITE ACCESS
-  POTENTIAL SECONDARY ACCESS
-  POTENTIAL PEDESTRIAN/ CYCLE ACCESS
-  EXISTING BRIDLEWAY
-  PRINCIPAL ROUTE
-  SECONDARY ROUTE
-  TERTIARY ROUTE
-  PRIVATE DRIVE

5.5 PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE LINKS





- KEY**
- SITE BOUNDARY
 - △ SITE ACCESS
 - △ POTENTIAL SECONDARY ACCESS
 - △ POTENTIAL PEDESTRIAN ACCESS
 - EXISTING BRIDLEWAY
 - PROPOSED BLOCK STRUCTURE
 - PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN ROUTE
 - FOCAL AREA
 - PUBLIC OPEN SPACE
 - NOISE BUFFER
 - BRONZE AGE RING DITCH
 - PROPOSED SUDS
 - EXISTING TREES
 - EXISTING PLANTING
 - PROPOSED TREES
 - PROPOSED PLANTING
 - PRINCIPAL ROUTE
 - SECONDARY ROUTE
 - TERTIARY ROUTE
 - PRIVATE DRIVE
 - * FOCAL BUILDING
 - FRONTAGE

5.7 DESIGN CHANGES

The concept masterplan was updated in light of the additional technical evidence work undertaken and having regard to the evolving national and local planning policy and guidance since the previous version was prepared.

Particular consideration has been given to the sustainability of the site when developing these proposals. The concept masterplan includes large areas of landscaped green space throughout the site which will create an attractive place for people to live. Sustainable urban drainage systems will ensure effective surface water drainage to avoid any increase in flood risk as a result of this development. The plan also incorporates natural and enhanced boundaries to improve acoustics within the site.

The revised concept masterplan will improve walkability throughout the site, connecting to Harrow Way and Weyhill Road and incorporating footpaths throughout the site.

The key changes include:

- The revised masterplan proposes 175 rather than 210 homes following additional survey work and to allow for the preservation in situ of the key archaeology finds.
- A green buffer has been created between the proposal as the properties off Shorts Lane (Penton Corner). This reflects comments that have been received during the Regulation 18 consultation. The green buffer will help ensure that the potential 'ring ditch' will be protected, which is an underground feature and not visible
- The plans incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDs), which are focused at the south of the site. The location of these sites has been informed by the updated drainage work that has been undertaken on the site.
- A naturalised play area has been incorporated within the proposals, and in a central position on the site.
- Additional and enhanced landscaping is proposed to the east of the site. This will create a natural buffer between the employment space.
- The findings of the noise investigation and impact review have helped shaped the proposals, with the enhanced eastern landscaped edge improving site acoustics.
- The scheme would provide a valuable mix of new homes, consistent with the most recent recommended Test Valley housing mix and incorporating policy-compliant levels of affordable homes.

Previous Concept Master Plan



Updated Concept Plan



6.0

DELIVERABILITY

Paragraph 68 of the NPPF states that planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability. Planning policies should identify a supply of specific, deliverable sites for years one to five of the plan period.

The glossary states that: 'To be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years.' This Vision Document has demonstrated that the site meets the above criteria, for the reasons summarised below.

7.1 SITE SUITABILITY

- The site is surrounded on three sides by development with residential and commercial being the predominant land uses.
- The site is functionally a part of Andover which is at the top of the settlement hierarchy and provides a wide range of facilities and amenities, which are accessible to the site by walking, cycling and public transport.
- The site benefits from a good vehicular access point as well as several potential pedestrian access points (via the adjacent PROW network).
- The existing mature tree-lined hedgerow boundaries work with the surrounding topography to provide a good degree of enclosure and screening of views into the site. The site is also well screened from the east by the presence of the adjacent commercial buildings.
- The site is located below the ridgeline across which the Harrow Way and associated tree belt run which provide effective screening of views from the north and north-west towards the Pentons.
- A review of the Environment Agency Flood Data Map has identified the site is entirely within Flood Zone 1 (lowest flood risk) whilst the surface water flood risk present can be managed through an effective on-site strategy.
- The natural topography of the site allows the majority of the development to be integrated within the landscape and avoid breaking the ridgeline, thus preventing long distance views towards the site.
- The site is not within any area designated for landscape sensitivity or of international, national or local ecological importance.

7.2 SITE AVAILABILITY

The land is within the control of Barratt David Wilson Homes and there are no known legal or ownership issues that would constrain the site coming forwards for development in the immediate future.

7.3 SITE VIABILITY

A comprehensive development for c.180 dwellings (including policy compliant affordable housing) is considered to be achievable and viable within the next five years, subject to planning consent. There are no significant physical or potential environmental constraints on the site that would restrict the economic viability of a residential development of this scale.

