

Appendix G

Methodology and Summary Townscape and Visual Effects

METHODOLOGY FOR LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- M1 In landscape and visual impact assessment, a distinction is normally drawn between *landscape/townscape effects* (i.e. effects on the character or quality of the landscape (or townscape), irrespective of whether there are any views of the landscape, or viewers to see them) and *visual effects* (i.e. effects on people's views of the landscape, principally from public rights of way and areas with public access, but also private views from residential properties). Thus, a development may have extensive landscape effects but few visual effects if, for example, there are no properties or public viewpoints nearby. Or alternatively, few landscape effects but substantial visual effects if, for example, the landscape is already degraded or the development is not out of character with it, but can clearly be seen from many residential properties and/or public areas.
- M2 The assessment of landscape & visual effects is less amenable to scientific or statistical analysis than some environmental topics and inherently contains an element of subjectivity. However, the assessment should still be undertaken in a logical, consistent and rigorous manner, based on experience and judgement, and any conclusions should be able to demonstrate a clear rationale. To this end, various guidelines have been published, the most relevant of which, for assessments of the effects of a development, rather than of the character or quality of the landscape itself, form the basis of the assessment and are as follows:

'Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment', produced jointly by the Institute of Environmental Assessment and the Landscape Institute (GLVIA 3rd edition 2013); and

'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment', October 2014 (Christine Tudor, Natural England) to which reference is also made. This stresses the need for a holistic assessment of landscape character, including physical, biological and social factors.

'Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations', Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 02/21

LANDSCAPE/TOWNSCAPE EFFECTS

- M3 Landscape/townscape quality is a subjective judgement based on the condition and characteristics of a landscape/townscape. It will often be informed by national, regional or local designations made upon it in respect of its quality e.g. National Landscapes (formerly AONBs). Sensitivity relates to the inherent value placed on a landscape / townscape and the ability of that landscape/townscape to accommodate change.

Landscape sensitivity can vary with:

- (i) *existing land uses;*
- (ii) *the pattern and scale of the landscape;*
- (iii) *visual enclosure/openness of views, and distribution of visual receptors;*
- (iv) *susceptibility to change;*
- (v) *the scope for mitigation, which would be in character with the existing landscape; and*
- (vi) *the condition and value placed on the landscape.*

- M4 The concept of landscape/townscape value is considered in order to avoid consideration only of how scenically attractive an area may be, and thus to avoid undervaluing areas of strong character but little scenic beauty. In the process of making this assessment, the following factors, among others, are considered with relevance to the site in question: landscape quality (condition), scenic quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interest, recreation value, perceptual aspects and associations.
- M5 Nationally valued landscapes are recognised by designation, such as National Parks and National Landscapes (formerly AONBs) which have particular planning policies applied to them. Nationally valued townscapes are typically those covered by a Conservation Area or similar designation. Paragraph 174 of the current NPPF outlines that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes '*...in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan*'.
- M6 There is a strong inter-relationship between landscape/townscape quality, value and sensitivity as high quality/value landscapes/townscapes usually have a low ability to accommodate change.
- M7 For the purpose of our assessment, landscape/townscape quality, value and sensitivity is assessed using the criteria in Tables LE1 and LE2. Typically, landscapes/townscapes which carry a quality designation and which are otherwise attractive or unspoilt will in general be more sensitive, while those which are less attractive or already affected by significant visual detractors and disturbance will be generally less sensitive.
- M8 The magnitude of change is the scale, extent and duration of change to a landscape arising from the proposed development and was assessed using the criteria in Table LE3.
- M9 Landscape/townscape effects were assessed in terms of the interaction between the magnitude of the change brought about by the development and the quality, value & sensitivity of the landscape resource affected. The landscape/townscape effects can be either beneficial, adverse or neutral. Landscape effects can be direct (i.e. impact on physical features, e.g. landform, vegetation, watercourses etc.), or indirect (i.e. impact on landscape character as a result of the introduction of new elements within the landscape). Direct visual effects result from changes to existing views.
- M10 In this way, landscapes/townscapes of the highest sensitivity, when subjected to a high magnitude of change from the proposed development, are likely to give rise to 'substantial' landscape/townscape effects which can be either adverse or beneficial. Conversely, landscapes of low sensitivity, when subjected to a low magnitude of change from the proposed development, are likely to give rise to only 'slight' or neutral landscape effects. Beneficial landscape effects may arise from such things as the creation of new landscape features, changes to management practices and improved public access. For the purpose of this assessment the landscape/townscape effects have been judged at completion of the development and in year 15. This approach acknowledges that landscape/townscape effects can reduce as new planting/mitigation measures become established and achieve their intended objectives.

VISUAL EFFECTS

- M11 Visual effects are concerned with people's views of the landscape/townscape and the change that will occur. Like landscape effects, viewers or receptors are categorised by their sensitivity. For example, views from private dwellings are generally of a higher sensitivity than those from places of work.

- M12 In describing the content of a view the following terms are used:
- No view - no views of the development;
 - Glimpse - a fleeting or distant view of the development, often in the context of wider views of the landscape;
 - Partial - a clear view of part of the development only;
 - Filtered - views to the development which are partially screened, usually by intervening vegetation - the degree of filtering may change with the seasons;
 - Open - a clear view to the development.
- M13 The sensitivity of the receptor varies according to its susceptibility to a particular type of change, or the value placed on it (e.g. views from a recognised beauty spot will have a greater sensitivity). Visual sensitivity was assessed using the criteria in Table VE1.
- M14 The magnitude of change is the degree in which the view(s) may be altered as a result of the proposed development and will generally decrease with distance from its source, until a point is reached where there is no discernible change. The magnitude of change in regard to the views was assessed using the criteria in Table VE2.
- M15 Visual effects were then assessed in terms of the interaction between the magnitude of the change brought about by the development and also the sensitivity of the visual receptor affected.
- M16 As with landscape effects, a high sensitivity receptor, when subjected to a high magnitude of change from the proposed development, is likely to experience 'substantial' visual effects which can be either adverse or beneficial. Conversely, receptors of low sensitivity, when subjected to a slight magnitude of change from the proposed development, are likely to experience only 'slight' or neutral visual effects, which can be either beneficial or adverse.
- M17 Unless specific slab levels of buildings have been specified, the assessment has assumed that slab levels will be within 750mm of existing ground level.

MITIGATION AND RESIDUAL EFFECTS

- M18 Mitigation measures are described as those measures, including any process or activity, designed to avoid, reduce and compensate for adverse landscape and/or visual effects resulting from the proposed development.
- M19 In situations where proposed mitigation measures are likely to change over time, as with planting to screen a development, it is important to make a distinction between any likely effects that will arise in the short-term and those that will occur in the long-term or 'residual effects' once mitigation measures have established. In this assessment, the visual effects of the development have been considered at completion of the entire project and at 15 years thereafter.
- M20 Mitigation measures can have a residual, positive impact on the effects arising from a development, whereas the short-term impact may be adverse.

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

- M21 The assessment concisely considers and describes the main landscape/townscape and visual effects resulting from the proposed development. The narrative text demonstrates the reasoning behind judgements concerning the landscape and visual effects of the proposals. Where appropriate, the text is supported by tables which summarise the sensitivity of the views/landscape/townscape, the magnitude of change and describe any resulting effects.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

- M22 Cumulative effects are *'the additional changes caused by a proposed development in conjunction with other similar developments or as the combined effect of a set of developments, taken together.'*
- M23 In carrying out landscape assessment it is for the author to form a judgement on whether or not it is necessary to consider any planned developments and to form a judgement on how these could potentially affect a project.

ZONE OF THEORETICAL VISIBILITY (ZTV)

- M24 A ZTV map can help to determine the potential visibility of the site and identify those locations where development at the site is likely to be most visible from the surrounding area. Where a ZTV is considered appropriate for a proposed development the following methodology is used.
- M25 The process is in two stages, and for each, a digital terrain model ('DTM') using Key TERRA-FIRMA computer software is produced and mapped onto an OS map. The DTM is based on Ordnance Survey Landform Profile tiles, providing a digital record of existing landform across the UK, based on a 10 metre grid. There is the potential for minor discrepancies between the DTM and the actual landform where there are topographic features that are too small to be picked up by the 10 metre grid. A judgement will be made to determine the extent of the study area based on the specific site and the nature of the proposed change, and the reasons for the choice will be set out in the report. The study area will be determined by local topography but is typically set at 7.5km.
- M26 Different heights are then assigned to significant features, primarily buildings and woodland, thus producing the first stage of an 'existing' ZTV illustrating the current situation of the site and surrounding area. This data is derived from OS Open Map Data, and verified during the fieldwork, with any significant discrepancies in the data being noted and the map adjusted accordingly. Fieldwork is confined to accessible parts of the site, public rights of way, the highway network and other publicly accessible areas.
- M27 The second stage is to produce a 'proposed' ZTV with the same base as the 'existing' ZTV. The proposed development is introduced into the model as either a representative spot height, or a series of heights, and a viewer height of 1.7m is used. Illustrating the visual envelope of the proposed development within the specific site.
- M28 The model is based on available data and fieldwork and therefore may not take into account all development or woodland throughout the study area, nor the effect of smaller scale planting or hedgerows. It also does not take into account areas of recent or continuous topographic change from, for instance, mining operations.

VISUALISATION TYPE METHODOLOGY

- M29 The photographs and visualisations within this report have been prepared in general conformance with the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 06/19. The 'types', as set out within the Guidance, comprise the following:
- Type 1 - annotated viewpoint photographs;
 - Type 2 - 3D wireline / model;
 - Type 3 - photomontage / photowire;
 - Type 4 - photomontage / photowire (survey / scale verifiable).
- M30 Photographs were taken with a digital camera with a lens that approximates to 50mm, to give a similar depth of view to the human eye. In some cases images have been

joined together to form a panorama. The prevailing weather and atmospheric conditions, and any effects on visibility are noted. Images are displayed at the most appropriate size, taking into account the published guidance, legibility at A3 paper size, and context (which is often shown for illustrative purposes only), and allows for enlarged scale printing if required.

- M31 The Guidance Note advocates a proportionate and reasonable approach, which includes professional judgement, in order to aid informed decision making.
- M32 The determination of the suitable Visualisation Type to aid in illustrating the effects of the scheme, has been determined by a range of factors as set out below, including the timing of the project, the technical expertise, and costs involved.
- M33 Where it is deemed suitable or necessary to utilise the Visualisation Types set out within the Guidance Note, the table below has been used to determine which Visualisation Type is most appropriate to the project, unless otherwise specified within the report.
- M34 The table below (based on Table 1 within the Guidance Note) sets out the intended purpose and user of the report, and the Likely Level of Effect. The Likely Level of Effect is based on Tables LE4 and VE3 in this methodology, and takes into consideration the type and nature of the proposed development, as well as the sensitivity of the host environment and key visual receptors. The Likely Level of Effect is based on an initial consideration of the landscape and visual effects of the project as a whole, and the subsequent assessment may conclude a lesser or higher level of overall effect, once completed. Table VMT also provides an indication as to the appropriate Visualisation Type, noting that it is not a fixed interpretation and that professional judgement should always be applied.
- M35 Additional photographs (which do not conform to any Type) may be included to illustrate the character of the landscape/townscape, or to illustrate relevant characteristics, for example the degree and nature of intervening vegetation, or reciprocal views from residential properties.

Table VTM		VISUALISATION TYPE METHODOLOGY				
		Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4	
User, Purpose, and Likely Level of Effect	A	Evidence submitted to most Public Inquiries, most planning applications for EIA development accompanied by Landscape and Visual ES Chapters.				
		Neutral	Negligible	Slight	Moderate	Substantial
	B	Planning applications for most non-EIA development accompanied by LVIA/LVA, where there are concerns about landscape and visual effects and effective mitigation may be required. Some Landscape and Visual ES Chapters.				
		Neutral	Negligible	Slight	Moderate	Substantial
C	Planning applications where the character and appearance of the development is a material consideration, but where a LVIA/LVA may not be required.					
	Neutral/Negligible/Slight		Moderate	Substantial		
D	To inform the iterative process of assessment and design with client, and/or pre-application consultations with the competent authority.					
	Neutral/Negligible/Slight/Moderate			Substantial		

Table LE 1

LANDSCAPE / TOWNSCAPE QUALITY AND VALUE

	Very High	High	Medium	Low
Description of Landscape/Townscape Quality and Value	<p>Landscape Quality: Intact and very attractive landscape which may be nationally recognised/designated for its scenic beauty. e.g. National Park, National Landscapes or World Heritage Site.</p> <p>Townscape Quality: A townscape of very high quality which is unique in its character, and recognised nationally/internationally, e.g. World Heritage Site</p> <p>Value: Very high quality landscape or townscape with Statutory Designation for landscape/townscape quality/ value, e.g. National Park, World Heritage Site, Registered Park or Garden. Contains rare elements or significant cultural/historical associations.</p>	<p>Landscape Quality: A landscape, usually combining varied topography, historic features and few visual detractors. A landscape known and cherished by many people from across the region. e.g. County Landscape Site such as a Special Landscape Area.</p> <p>Townscape Quality: A well designed townscape of high quality with a locally recognised and distinctive character e.g. Conservation Area</p> <p>Value: High quality landscape/townscape or lower quality landscape with un-fettered public access, (e.g. commons, public park) or with strong cultural associations. May have important views out to landmarks/designated landscapes and few detracting features. May possess perceptual qualities of tranquility or wildness.</p>	<p>Landscape Quality: Non-designated landscape area, generally pleasant but with no distinctive features, often displaying relatively ordinary characteristics. May have detracting features.</p> <p>Townscape Quality: A typical, pleasant townscape with a coherent urban form but with no distinguishing features or designation for quality.</p> <p>Value: An ordinary landscape/townscape of local value which may have some detracting features. No recognised statutory designations for landscape/townscape quality. A landscape which may have limited public access and/ or have pleasant views out, or be visible in public views.</p>	<p>Landscape / Townscape Quality: Unattractive or degraded landscape/townscape, affected by numerous detracting elements e.g. industrial areas, infrastructure routes and un-restored mineral extractions.</p> <p>Value: Landscape/townscape generally of lower quality. A landscape with limited public access, no designations or recognised cultural significance. Limited public views.</p>

Table LE 2

LANDSCAPE / TOWNSCAPE SENSITIVITY

	Very High	High	Medium	Low
Description of Sensitivity	<p>A landscape/townscape with a very low ability to accommodate change such as a nationally designated landscape.</p> <p>A landscape/townscape with limited ability to accommodate change because such change may lead to some loss of valuable features or elements. Development of the type proposed could potentially be discordant with the character of the landscape/townscape.</p> <p>A landscape/townscape with reasonable ability to accommodate change. Change may lead to a limited loss of some features or characteristics. Development of the type proposed would not be discordant with the character of the landscape/townscape.</p> <p>A landscape/townscape with good ability to accommodate change. Change would not lead to a significant loss of features or characteristics, and there would be no significant loss of character or quality. Development of the type proposed would not be discordant with the landscape/townscape in which it is set and may result in a beneficial change.</p>			

Table LE 3 LANDSCAPE / TOWNSCAPE MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE

	Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible	Neutral
Description of the Change predicted	Total loss of or significant impact on key characteristics, features or elements				
	Partial loss of or impact on key characteristics, features or elements				
	Minor loss of or alteration to one or more key landscape/ townscape characteristics, features or elements				
	Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key landscape/ townscape characteristics, features or elements				
	No loss or alteration of key landscape/ townscape characteristics, features or elements				

Table LE 4 LANDSCAPE / TOWNSCAPE EFFECTS

	Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible	Neutral
Description of the Effect	The proposals will alter the landscape/ townscape in that they: will result in substantial change in the character, landform, scale and pattern of the landscape/ townscape; are visually intrusive and would disrupt important views; are likely to impact on the integrity of a range of characteristic features and elements and their setting; will impact a high quality or highly vulnerable landscape; cannot be adequately mitigated.				
	The proposals: • noticeably change the character, scale and pattern of the landscape/ townscape; • may have some impacts on a landscape/ townscape of recognised quality or on vulnerable and important characteristic features or elements. • are a noticeable element in key views; • not possible to fully mitigate.				
	The proposals: • do not quite fit the landform and scale of the landscape/ townscape and will result in relatively minor changes to existing landscape character; • will impact on certain views into and across the area; • mitigation will reduce the impact of the proposals but some minor residual effects will remain.				
	The proposals: • complement the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape/ townscape; • development may occupy only a relatively small part of the Site; • maintain the majority of landscape features; • incorporates measures for mitigation to ensure the scheme will blend in well with the landscape/ townscape and mitigates any loss of vegetation.				
	The proposals: • maintain existing landscape/ townscape character; • has no impact on landscape features, such as trees, hedgerows, watercourses, etc.; • utilises a highly degraded landscape or brownfield site.				

Footnote:

1. Each level (other than neutral) of change identified can be either regarded as 'beneficial' or 'adverse'. The above table relates to adverse landscape effects, however where proposals complement or enhance landscape character, these will have a comparable range of beneficial landscape effects.

Table VE 1

VISUAL SENSITIVITY

	High	Medium	Low
Description of the Receptor	<p>Residential properties with predominantly open views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views will normally be from ground and first floors and from two or more windows of rooms mainly in use during the day.</p> <p>Users of Public Rights of Way in sensitive or generally unspoilt areas.</p> <p>Predominantly non-motorised users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside.</p> <p>Views from within an National Landscape, National Park, World Heritage Site or Conservation Area and views for visitors to recognised viewpoints or beauty spots.</p> <p>Users of outdoor recreational facilities with predominantly open views where the purpose of that recreation is enjoyment of the countryside - e.g. Country Parks, National Trust or other access land etc.</p>	<p>Residential properties with partial views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views will normally be from first floor windows only, or an oblique view from one ground floor window, or may be partially obscured by garden or other intervening vegetation.</p> <p>Users of Public Rights of Way in less sensitive areas or where there are significant existing intrusive features.</p> <p>Users of outdoor recreational facilities with restricted views or where the purpose of that recreation is incidental to the view e.g. sports fields.</p> <p>Schools and other institutional buildings, and their outdoor areas.</p> <p>Users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside, whether motorised or not.</p>	<p>People in their place of work.</p> <p>Users of main roads or passengers in public transport on main routes.</p> <p>Users of outdoor recreational facilities with restricted views and where the purpose of that recreation is unrelated to the view e.g. go-karting track.</p>

Table VE 2		VISUAL MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE				
		Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible	Neutral
Description of the Change predicted	Large and dominating changes which affect a substantial part of the view.					
	Clearly perceptible and noticeable changes within a significant proportion of the view.					
	Small changes to existing views, either as a minor component of a wider view, or smaller changes over a larger proportion of the view(s).					
	Very minor changes over a small proportion of the view(s).					
	No discernible change to the view(s).					

Table VE 3		VISUAL EFFECTS				
		Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible	Neutral
Description of the Effects	The proposals would have a significant impact on a view from a receptor of medium sensitivity, or less damage (or improvement) to a view from a highly sensitive receptor, and would be an obvious or dominant element in the view.					
	The proposals would impact on a view from a medium sensitive receptor, or less harm (or improvement) to a view from a more sensitive receptor, and would be a readily discernible element in the view.					
	The proposals would have a limited effect on a view from a medium sensitive receptor, but would still be a visible element within the view, or a greater effect on a view from a receptor of lower sensitivity.					
	The proposals would result in a negligible change to the view but would still be discernible.					
	No change in the view.					

Footnote:

1. Each level (other than neutral) of change identified can be either regarded as 'beneficial' or 'adverse'.

Table SLE 1 LANDSCAPE/TOWNSCAPE EFFECTS

Direct effects on landscape features	Quality & Sensitivity	Existing Conditions	Impact and Mitigation	Magnitude of Change	Effect Year 1	Effect Year 15
Trees	High	The Site is bounded to the north and east by a mature line of trees, predominately Lime. To the south east is a block of established deciduous woodland, containing mature and semi-mature tree species and a sparse native understorey. A double line of mature Lime trees defines the southern edge of the Site. A tree survey has been undertaken and this grades the majority of the onsite trees as Category B, and therefore of moderate quality. In townscape terms these features make an important contribution to the character of the neighbouring area and are therefore assessed as high quality and sensitivity.	The proposed development will retain and protect all of the significant trees and groups of trees on the Site. A small number of low-quality trees will be removed to provide the playing pitches, however these are not visually important specimens and their removal can be compensated for by new tree planting within areas of open space, the playing fields and the proposed built environment. Overall there will be an increase in tree cover and species composition across the Site.	Low	Neutral	Slight beneficial as the proposed tree planting matures.
Public Access	N/A	The Site is not currently publically accessible.	The proposals will open up access to the open space areas across the Site.	Low	Slight Beneficial	Slight Beneficial

Land Use i.e. Former School Fields	Medium	The Site comprises the former school fields associated with the former Friends' School.	The existing school fields will be developed to provide a new development, associated open space and a sport facility. There will be a permanent partial loss of school fields on the Site although these are not currently in use.	Medium	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse
Indirect effects on landscape / townscape character		Existing Conditions	Impact and Mitigation	Magnitude of Change	Effect Year 1	Effect Year 15
Townscape character of the Site	Medium	The Site comprises the school fields associated with the former Friends' School. The majority of the Site comprises relatively flat, un-mowed grassland, however it is bordered by mature trees, and a block of woodland occupies the south eastern corner. There has been some disturbance in the northern part of the Site, due to the stock piling of some materials from the neighbouring construction work which is underway on the main school Site. The Site lies within the Conservation Area but has a very different character to the surrounding 19 th century and later housing and the buildings at the former Friends School.	The Site will undergo a significant change in character as the former school fields are partially replaced by residential development, open space and infrastructure, although the southern part of the Site will remain as playing pitches. The Site is located within the urban area of Saffron Walden and bordered by residential development. The proposals will form an extension to the existing residential development currently being constructed on the adjacent school site. The new homes will be well designed and are compatible with surrounding residential area in terms of scale and character. The dense belt of vegetation on Mount Pleasant Road means that there would only be limited intervisibility between the road and the new dwellings. Where filtered views of the new homes are	Substantial - Moderate	Moderate Adverse	Moderate – Slight Adverse

			available in winter, the proposals will present an attractive and well considered frontage which will be consistent with the scale and pattern of residential development in the local area.			
Townscape character of the Former Friends' School	High	<p>The former school lies entirely within the Saffron Walden Conservation Area. It is in private ownership and is not publically accessible. A planning application for conversion of the school building to apartments, the demolition of several ancillary school buildings and the construction of a number of residential dwellings in the school grounds has been granted planning consent and is under construction.</p> <p>The main school buildings and the open space and vegetation at the frontage with Mount Pleasant Road contribute to the character and setting of the road and the Conservation Area. Similarly, the established vegetation at the school boundary is an important component of the wider townscape. None of the school</p>	<p>The character of the neighbouring school site is undergoing change to provide a residential development, with the conversion of several buildings including the gym building which lies between the Site and the main school building.</p> <p>The proposals will result in an extension to the planned residential development on the school site. The existing mature boundary trees and woodland will all remain. New open space will be provided at the north western edge of the new development where the new homes will look towards the new homes and amenity areas to the rear of the school building.</p> <p>The new homes will be designed to have a similar architectural style to the new homes on the school site and the neighbouring The Avenue.</p>	Negligible	Slight - Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse

		buildings are listed however several are identified as being of local value.				
Townscape Character Mount Pleasant Road	High	<p>Mount Pleasant Road is dominated by the former Friends' School, with the main school buildings and the mature boundary vegetation contributing in part to the character of the street.</p> <p>Beyond the former school site, Mount Pleasant Road is characterised by a series of Victorian villas and some modern detached properties. It has an eclectic vernacular, which adds to the interest and character of the route. Properties are generally located in large plots, set back from the road in mature gardens which add to the vegetated character of the street.</p>	<p>The proposals will retain the existing band of mature trees at the Site frontage with Mount Pleasant Road. The new homes will be set back from the Mount Pleasant Road frontage and orientated to positively address the frontage tree line. Due to the density of the vegetation on the Mount Pleasant Road boundary there will be very limited intervisibility with the new homes, with filtered views only in winter when the vegetation is out of leaf. The elevations of the new development frontage show that the new homes will be detached, 2 storey and of attractive design.</p> <p>The new dwellings will occupy an area identified as Important Open Space in the Conservation Area Appraisal. However, due to the visual containment of the school fields, their openness makes a much more limited contribution to the setting of Mount Pleasant Road. Where filtered views of the new homes are available in winter, the proposals will present an attractive and well considered frontage which</p>	Negligible	Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse

			will be consistent with the scale and pattern of residential development in the local area.			
Townscape of the wider Residential Area	<p><u>The Avenue</u> Medium High (Quality) and Medium (Sensitivity)</p> <p><u>Late Twentieth Century Estate Development</u> Medium (Quality) and Medium-Low (Sensitivity)</p>	<p>The Avenue is a modern development which lies alongside the western Site boundary. It is focused on the avenue of Lime trees which extend south from the rear of the former Friends' School. A series of courtyard developments are located adjacent to the boundary with the Site. The new housing has a contemporary character but references the Essex vernacular employing a diverse palette of materials, including brick and render, weather boarding and timber shingles.</p> <p>To the south and east of the Site the townscape is characterised by late twentieth century estate development grouped in cul-de-sacs or along estate roads. This development is separated from the school fields by the established tree lines and woodland to the perimeter of the Site. The townscape is pleasant but undistinguished.</p>	<p>The existing housing area at The Avenue overlooks the south western edge of the Site. Much of the development adjacent to the Site is contained within courtyards, with the built form orientated so that views of the Site from the public realm are limited. Setting back housing from this boundary behind an area of open space and landscape will ensure effects on the adjacent townscape character to the west are very limited.</p> <p>The Site is well contained from the adjoining residential area to the south and east, with existing housing bordering much of the Site boundaries. The well vegetated boundaries contribute to the overall tree cover within the area and can be appreciated from a small number of public vantage points within the adjacent residential area. The proposed development will not impact on this key characteristic and the character of these residential areas will remain largely unaffected.</p>	Neutral / Negligible	Neutral / Negligible Adverse	Neutral / Negligible Adverse

Other Effects						
Cumulative impacts	We are not aware of any other significant developments that are approved or allocated within the vicinity of the Site, which would affect this assessment. The redevelopment of the former Friends' School buildings to the west is ongoing and forms part of the baseline considered in this report					
Lighting	<p>The school fields are unlit. However, there will be light sources in the neighbouring school site which is undergoing redevelopment for residential dwellings. The Site is enclosed by residential development and there is street lighting and background lighting from properties.</p> <p>The proposal is for a medium density residential development with associated lighting. The development is not anticipated to give rise to any abnormal night-time effects and will result in a small increase in background lighting levels which will be seen in the context of existing lighting within the neighbouring residential area.</p>					
Construction Phase	There will be temporary landscape and visual effects arising from the construction phase of the scheme. These will include, amongst other things, stock piling of materials, temporary hoardings/fencing and vehicle and plant movements, both on the Site and on the surrounding road network. It is not anticipated that the scheme will give rise to any abnormal landscape or visual effects above those that would be expected from a development of this nature. It is anticipated that the extent and timing of these effects will be controlled through a Construction Management Plan.					

Table SVE 1 VISUAL EFFECTS

Views	Sensitivity	Existing Conditions	Proposals and mitigation	Magnitude of Change	Visual Effect Year 1	Visual Effect Year 15
Views from Mount Pleasant Road (Photographs 10, 11, 18 and 19)	High	Views of the Site frontage are available from the section of Mount Pleasant Road which extends alongside the northern edge of the school fields. In views from the approach from the west, the red-brick walling which marks the frontage of the main school site, and the mature, heavily treed frontage to the school form an important component of the existing character of the view. The interior of the Site however is entirely screened from view.	The proposed access to the Site will be visible from a section of Mount Pleasant Road, however it occupies the footprint of the existing access and there will be little change in the character of the view. To the left of the access point are the terrace of houses which occupy the former gym building and these effectively screen views to the Site in views along the Site access.	Neutral (views from the west)	Neutral (west)	Neutral (west)
		Views when adjacent to the existing access look towards the new buildings which are being constructed to the east of the access. From this section of the road there are views through the Site access of the existing parking areas and filtered views of the school buildings. The school fields are largely screened from view behind the new terrace of buildings.	There will be filtered views of development at the Site from the section of Mount Pleasant Road which borders the Site. In summer, views of the new housing will be effectively screened by the density of tree cover and understorey at the Site boundary. However, in winter the filtering effect of vegetation will be reduced and there will be some intervisibility with housing at the northern edge of the Site. Whilst there will be a change in the character of this view as the filtered views of housing replaces filtered views of the former school fields, given the residential context of the Site housing will not appear incongruous. The new homes will be well designed and set back from the highway behind an access road and front garden landscaping.	Negligible / Neutral (Summer views when adjacent to the northern Site boundary)	Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse
		Views from the approach along Mount Pleasant Road from the east are screened by the existing tree line alongside the northern edge of the Site. In winter, when the deciduous vegetation is out of leaf, there will be filtered views into the Site from this section of the road.		Moderate – Slight (winter views when adjacent to the northern Site boundary)	Moderate - Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse (As new landscaping matures)

Views from Debden Road (Photograph 17)	Low	The Site is not visible from Debden Road.	Development would not be visible from Debden Road.	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Views from The Avenue (photographs 15 and 16)	Medium	There are a small number of opportunities for glimpsed views towards the Site from within The Avenue, although the majority of views are screened by intervening development. There are views from the public realm at Pavilion Way. In this view the school fields are screened by the existing fence, however the vegetation and dwellings at, and adjacent to, the Site's eastern boundary are visible above the fence as are views of the ongoing construction work in the school site. Views from within Linden Square and Tilia Court are prevented by existing development alongside the Site boundary.	The majority of views from The Avenue are screened by intervening housing. Housing at the Site will be visible in a framed view along Pavilion Way over the existing fence at the end of the private driveway. The proposed housing will be set back from this boundary beyond the proposed carpark to serve the playing fields. The new homes will be of similar design and detailing to those in The Avenue, and while there will be some loss in openness of the existing view the new homes will appear as a continuation of the surrounding residential area.	Negligible	Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse
Views from Greenways (photograph 14)	Medium	In summer views Site is screened by vegetation at the Site boundary. The filtering effect of the vegetation will reduce in winter months, although the school fields will remain well contained.	The proposed new homes will be set back from the southern edge of the Site and will be screened in views from the open space at Greenways by the dense boundary vegetation. There may be some intervisibility with the proposed playing fields and the edge of housing in winter months, but these will be limited and heavily filtered.	Negligible	Neutral (Summer views) Negligible Adverse (Winter views)	Neutral (Summer views) Negligible Adverse (Winter views)
Views from Chichester Road and Old Mill Road	Medium	There are framed views of the eastern boundary vegetation from Chichester Road and Old Mill Road.	There are framed views of the boundary vegetation available from Old Mill Road and Chichester Road to the east of the Site and there will be some	Slight	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse

(photographs 12 and 13)			intervisibility with the upper parts of dwellings on the eastern edge of the Site. These will be heavily filtered in summer months by the existing tree cover, but there will be greater intervisibility when the vegetation is out of leaf.			
Residential Views						
Views from residential properties on Mount Pleasant Road (photographs 10, 11 and 19)	Medium	There are filtered views from the front curtilage and upper floor windows of several properties opposite the northern Site boundary. These views will be screened when vegetation is in leaf.	The new development will be screened when vegetation is in leaf. There will be filtered winter views of housing in the northern part of the Site. Development in this location will be well designed and will not be discordant or at odds with the prevailing residential character of the area.	Negligible / Neutral (Summer views) Slight (Winter views)	Negligible / Neutral Adverse Slight Adverse	Negligible / Neutral Adverse Slight Adverse
Views from residential properties Pavilion Way, Linden Square and Tilia Court (reciprocal views in photograph 05)	High	There are views from windows in the side elevations and gable ends of several properties which overlook the Site.	The new playing fields will be visible from the side elevation and gable ends of several properties which border the Site. There will also be some oblique views towards the proposed clubhouse and new homes in the central part of the Site.	Moderate	Moderate Adverse	Moderate – Slight Adverse
Views from residential properties on Greenways (Photograph 19)	Medium	There are limited, oblique, heavily filtered views from several properties on Greenways.	There may be some intervisibility with the proposed playing fields and the edge of housing in winter months, but these will be limited and heavily filtered.	Negligible	Neutral (Summer views) Negligible adverse (Winter views)	Neutral (Summer views) Negligible adverse (Winter views)
Views from residential properties within the built up area east of the Site	Medium	Majority of views are of the woodland in the south eastern corner of the Site. Some filtered views from rear gardens of properties	Occasional filtered views of upper floors of housing from a small number properties at the north eastern edge of Site.	Neutral / Negligible	Neutral / Negligible adverse	Neutral / Negligible adverse

(Photographs 12 and 13)		alongside the north eastern Site boundary.				
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Seasonal Variation

The above assessment is based upon an appraisal of summer views. In winter, the filtering effect of vegetation will reduce. This will affect a small number of views from locations on Mount Pleasant Road, Greenways and Chichester Road and Old Mill Road and have been considered in the above assessment.