LANDARB SOLUTIONS



Landscape and Visual Appraisal

Land north of Quarry House, Fenway, Steeple Aston

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been prepared by Stephen Wadsworth who is a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute and qualified urban designer.

1.2 This landscape and visual appraisal (LVA) is prepared on behalf of Mr Matthew Watson to accompany an *"Outline Planning Permission for up to 23 dwellings and associated open space with all matters reserved other than access"* ('the proposed development') at Land north of Quarry House, Fenway, Steeple Aston ('the Site'). The site and surrounding landscape are with the administrative area of Cherwell District Council .

1.3 In line with the guidelines of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition) GLVIA 3, this landscape appraisal takes a 'proportionate' approach, taking into consideration the scale, extent and nature of the proposals and the anticipated sphere of influence and effect the proposals are considered to have upon the surroundings.

1.4 The objective of the LVA is to assess the baseline landscape and visual character of the site and study area, and the potential landscape and visual effects that would arise from the proposals, including the proposed access and landscaping.

1.5 The LVA considers the potential effects of the proposals on:

- Landscape elements and features such as vegetation, topography and water bodies etc.,
- Visual amenity; and
- Landscape character.

1.6 The primary objectives of the LVA are as follows:

- To identify, describe and evaluate the current landscape character of the site and its surrounding area;
- To identify, describe and evaluate any notable individual landscape elements and/or features within the site;
- To determine the sensitivity of the landscape to the type of development proposed;
- To identify potential visual receptors (i.e. people who would be able to view the proposed development) and to evaluate their sensitivity to the type of changes proposed; and

- To identify and describe any effects of the proposals in so far as they affect the landscape and/or views and to evaluate the magnitude of change owing to those effects.

Site Visit

1.7 The visual assessment was undertaken in on 11th and 16th February 2026 when foliage was absent. Consideration has also been given to the effect on visibility in summer months owing to the presence of foliage.

Caveats

1.8 It is acknowledged that when carrying out the site visit and taking photos from the chosen viewpoint locations (from publicly accessible areas and vantage points), the report's author is actively and deliberately 'looking' for the 'site' within the local landscape.

1.9 In reality, visual receptors such as users of the public rights of way network and motorists alike will not 'actively' be 'looking' for the site whilst traversing the public rights of way and road network. Whilst each visual receptor will have a varying degree of appreciation for their surroundings, depending on what they are doing (playing sport, walking, driving), their efforts will typically not be concerned with 'actively' and 'deliberately' looking for any given 'site' or 'proposed development'.

1.10 The photoviews were accurate at the time they were taken. Site conditions can be subject to change, for example garden and field boundary hedgerows can be cut/trimmed by landowners/farmers, trees can be felled by landowners or blown over by adverse weather, and new trees can be planted. Therefore, the extent of visibility can potentially increase or decrease since the photoviews were taken. Such eventualities are not within the control of the report's author. The assessment of visibility within photoviews is accurate at the time of writing.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 This LVA has been undertaken with regard to the following best practice guidance:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition) – Landscape Institute/Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA);
- TGN 06/19 Visual Representation of development proposals - Landscape Institute/Institute 2019

2.2 As recommended within the published guidance, landscape (elements and character) and visual effects are assessed separately. A full methodology is given at Appendix 1 (see **Appendix 1 – Methodology**).

2.3 For the purposes of this assessment, unless otherwise stated, changes to landscape and visual amenity as a result of the proposed development are considered to be permanent and non-reversible.

Format of Report

2.4 After the first section of the report sets out the baseline scenario and incudes a policy review, the second part (the assessment part) of the report will focus on two key elements of landscape and visual assessment.

2.5 There are two important ways any development proposals can affect the landscape.

- Visually, or
- Physically.

Visual Assessment

2.6 Of the two ways, how the proposals are perceived visually in the landscape is perhaps the most important consideration and has a bearing upon mitigation by design, such

as any proposed planting recommendations, the siting of the proposals, the scale and materials used.

Landscape Character and Quality of the Proposals/Design

2.7 Once the visual amenity of the site is understood, the focus then lies with the character, the physical being and quality of the design of the proposals. A site not widely visible with the surroundings is no excuse for bad design and proposals that do not emulate local character and anchor themselves to their setting.

2.8 The section focusing on landscape character will include detailing the different elements of the proposals (such as planting, height and massing, materials, access and parking, and lighting), and setting out how the design team have designed the proposals to accord with local policy and design guidance recommendations.

3 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework

3.1 The latest iteration of the NPPF was published in August 2026. The NPPF sets out the government's policies for plan making and for making decisions on development proposals in England. The NPPF is careful to mention in paragraph 8 that 'plan-making policies should not be used when making decisions on development proposals'.

3.2 The NPPF highlights that 'the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, by managing the use and development of land in the long-term public interest.'

3.3 The NPPF consists of a series of thematic chapters. In Chapter 14, Achieving well designed places, policy DP3 establishes a series of key principles for well-designed places. These include the need for a proposed development to respond to the character and features of their site and its setting.

3.4 Chapter 19 is entitled 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment'. National decision making policy N2 'Improving the natural environment' lists a number of requirements for developments. Item a) states that development should, 'Consider the environmental qualities of land proposed for development, including habitats, landscape character and the natural beauty of the countryside, and identify opportunities for those qualities to be conserved or enhanced'.

3.5 Item d) states that development should 'conserve and enhance existing natural features of visual, historic or nature conservation value (such as established trees and hedgerows) where possible; and use appropriate landscaping to help create a well-designed place and integrate the development into its surroundings.'

3.6 N2 recognises the use of green infrastructure to provide benefits including for climate change and recreation etc.

3.7 National decision making policy N3 recognises the benefits of 'Trees in new development' stating that 'trees can provide for biodiversity, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the character and quality of the built environment…' Tree lined streets, trees in general and community orchards are necessitated.

3.8 National decision making policy N4 'Protected Landscapes' states in paragraph 1 that,

"Development proposals within Protected Landscapes should be limited in scale and extent and sensitively located and designed to avoid harm to the statutory purposes and special qualities of the Protected Landscape. Substantial weight should be placed on the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of these areas, and to conserving and enhancing wildlife and cultural heritage in National Parks and the Broads…"

3.9 'Major development' within Protected Landscapes is discouraged.

3.10 The NPPF has been of material consideration as part of our assessment of the site and its setting. The proposed development is deemed to have taken into consideration the overall framework guidance and principles contained within the NPPF.

Local Planning Policy

3.11 The site and its environs are within the administrative area of Cherwell District Council. The Cherwell District Council's website explains that the adopted development plan currently consists of:

- Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011 - 2031 Part 1 (July 2015)
- Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) Partial Review – Oxford's Unmet Housing Need (September 2020)
- Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (September 2017)
- 'Made' Neighbourhood Plans in Cherwell District
- Saved, retained policies of the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996
- Saved policies from Oxfordshire County Council's Minerals and Waste Local Plan 1996

3.12 The following policies are of most relevance to the proposals in landscape terms:

3.13 Policy ESD 13 states:

"Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement Opportunities will be sought to secure the enhancement of the character and appearance of the landscape, particularly in urban fringe locations, through the restoration, management or enhancement of existing landscapes, features or habitats and where appropriate the creation of new ones, including the planting of woodlands, trees and hedgerows. Development will be expected to respect and enhance local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. Proposals will not be permitted if they would:

- *Cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside*
- *Cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography*
- *Be inconsistent with local character Impact on areas judged to have a high level of tranquillity.*
- *Harm the setting of settlements, buildings, structures or other landmark features, or*
- *Harm the historic value of the landscape.*

Development proposals should have regard to the information and advice contained in the Council's Countryside Design Summary Supplementary Planning Guidance, and the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS),and be accompanied by a landscape assessment where appropriate."

3.14 Policy ESD15 The Character of the Built and Historic Environment states:

"Successful design is founded upon an understanding and respect for an area's unique built, natural and cultural context. New development will be expected to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design. All new development will be required to meet high design standards. Where development is in the vicinity of any of the District's distinctive

natural or historic assets, delivering high quality design that complements the asset will be essential.

New development proposals should:

Be designed to deliver high quality safe, attractive, durable and healthy places to live and work in.

Development of all scales should be designed to improve the quality and appearance of an area and the way it functions

Deliver buildings, places and spaces that can adapt to changing social, technological, economic and environmental conditions

Support the efficient use of land and infrastructure, through appropriate land uses, mix and density/development intensity

Contribute positively to an area's character and identity by creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness and respecting local topography and landscape features, including skylines, valley floors, significant trees, historic boundaries, landmarks, features or views, in particular within designated landscapes, within the Cherwell Valley and within conservation areas and their setting

Conserve, sustain and enhance designated and non-designated 'heritage assets' (as defined in the NPPF) including buildings, features, archaeology, conservation areas and their settings, and ensure new development is sensitively sited and integrated in accordance with advice in the NPPF and NPPG. Proposals for development that affect non-designated heritage assets will be considered taking account of the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset as set out in the NPPF and NPPG. Regeneration proposals that make sensitive use of heritage assets, particularly where these bring redundant or under used buildings or areas, especially any on English Heritage's At Risk Register, into appropriate use will be encouraged

Include information on heritage assets sufficient to assess the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. Where archaeological potential is identified this should

include an appropriate desk based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

Respect the traditional pattern of routes, spaces, blocks, plots, enclosures and the form, scale and massing of buildings.

Development should be designed to integrate with existing streets and public spaces, and buildings configured to create clearly defined active public frontages."

Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan

3.15 The site and surrounding are within the Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan area. The current made plan is now out of date and the revised plan has yet to be made.

4 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL BASELINE

4.1 This report takes a considered and 'proportionate' approach to the assessment of likely landscape and visual effects associated with the proposals.

Site Location

4.2 The site is located on the north-west edge of the settlement of Steeple Aston (see **Appendix 2 – Location Map**). The centre of the site is at grid reference SP 47123 26337. The site forms part of a larger land parcel within the same ownership (see **Appendix 3 – Site Location Plan**).

4.3 By the nature of the site's location, and considering the scale and extent of the proposals, the anticipated influence of the proposals will be localised and well contained. By virtue of the sites partially enclosed nature visual amenity is likely to be limited and confined to the immediate areas enclosing the site.

4.4 Effects upon character will be limited to the immediate environs as this appraisal will confirm.

Scale of the site

4.5 It is useful to identify the scale of the site area, to better understand how this relates to its surroundings, and what the potential scale of the proposals could be in relation to the site. The site is a medium/large scale parcel of land.

Scale of the proposals

4.6 It is useful to identify the scale of the proposals in relation to the site, to better understand how the proposals relate to the site itself, how much of the site is being developed, and what the potential visual sphere of influence is anticipated to be, in respect of the proposals.

4.7 The proposals relate to developing the site for residential development comprising 23 units and associated access and landscaping. Only a small part of the site will be

developed. The remainder will be retained as soft landscape. The built form proposals are therefore small in comparison to the site area.

Scale of visual influence upon surroundings

4.8 The site is considered a small/medium sized site, and the built form proposals are small. The site visit and visual assessment confirm and support the authors view that the sphere of influence of the proposals upon its surroundings is very localised on account of the intervening vegetation as shown in the viewpoints taken as part of the visual appraisal.

4.9 Having identified the anticipated sphere of influence the scale of the proposals are likely to have on its surroundings, the focus of this appraisal can be narrowed to an area of study 'proportionate' to the scale, extent and nature of the proposals.

4.10 Visual amenity and landscape character a will be assessed as part of this appraisal. It is prudent to note, however, that the scale of the proposals is not considered likely to have any effect greater than negligible upon the character of the national and local character areas in their entirety, given these are large geographic areas by comparison.

4.11 Given the enclosed nature of the site, any effects identified within this appraisal are likely to be in relation to the site and its immediate environs, to the extent shown on the photoview location plan (see **Appendix 4 – Photoview Location Plan**) as this appraisal will demonstrate.

4.12 The following section describes the individual elements, attributes, and key characteristics of the existing site and local landscape, which together contribute to an understanding of the landscape character.

4.13 The following physical landscape attributes will be described;

- Topography and Landform
- Hydrology and Water Features
- Landscape Framework – Tree and Vegetation Cover

- Public Rights of Way
- Public Highways and Transport Corridors
- Settlement Pattern and Built Form
- Landscape Designations
- Landscape Character

Topography/Landform

4.14 The site is situated at or about 128 metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and apart from a gentle rise into the site off Fenway, appears broadly level in profile.

4.15 Steeple Aston (including the site) is located on the east facing slope of the River Cherwell valley. To the east of the site the topography slopes down to the valley bottom to a low of approximately 70-75 metres AOD. To the west the topography continues to rise to reach, a publicly inaccessible, high point of 153 metres AOD approximately a kilometre from the site boundary.

Hydrology and Water Features

4.16 There are no obvious water features within or near the site.

Landscape Framework – Tree and Vegetation Cover

4.17 The site is located within a larger land parcel that has a strong landscape framework comprising belts of trees, hedgerows and woodland, particularly to its boundaries. Individual trees and groups of trees are located internally to the site and along part of its boundary.

4.18 Trees and belts of trees are common features within the settlement of Steeple Aston. The wider landscape surrounding the site and Steeple Aston as a whole is predominantly arable farmland with medium to large scale fields. However, hedgerows with occasional trees define most fields.

Public rights of way

4.19 The site is entirely private and does not have public access. The closest public rights of way are byway 364/4/10 to the west, which comes within approximately 100 metres of the site boundary, and footpaths 296/11/10 – 364/5/10 that run adjacent to (but

outside) the northern boundary of the larger land parcel containing the site. The latter are approximately 200 metres from the site boundary at their closet points.

Public Highways and Transport Corridors

4.20 The site is accessed from Fenway to the south. The nearest main road to the site is the A4260 Oxford Road approximately 600metres to the west.

Landscape Designations

4.21 The site is not located within or adjacent any nationally protected landscapes, and has no other landscape designations within the Local Plan or the emerging Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan.

Landscape Character

4.22 Landscape character assessments are documented at national, regional and local levels, and vary greatly in their level of detail, dependant on the scale and complexity of the landscape to which each assessment relates.

4.23 Landscape character assessments at national level for example provide more high level and generic descriptions for much wider geographic areas, compared to more local level assessments which provide more detailed descriptions and recommendations for much smaller local areas.

4.24 Therefore, to provide a robust assessment in respect of landscape character in relation to any proposal/development, it is of key importance to carry out a bespoke character assessment of any given project site and the local 'receiving' landscape within which the site is located and has the potential to affect as a result of the proposals being implemented.

4.25 The following have therefore been carried out to better understand the landscape character of the site and local landscape:

- Review of relevant national, regional, local landscape character assessments and identify characteristics of the site and local landscape;

- Complete a character field survey sheet, undertaken at the time of the site visit; and photographic record.

Review of National, Regional and Local Landscape Character Assessments

4.26 The site and the surrounding landscape have previously been assessed as part of a number of published landscape character assessments. These published landscape character assessments form a hierarchy from the national level to the district/local level.

National Landscape Character

4.27 England is divided in to 159 National Landscape Character Areas (NCAs). The site and surrounding area are within NCA 107 Cotswolds.

4.28 It is considered that at this small scale, the proposed development would bring about no perceptible material change to the key characteristics of the NCA within the wider landscape as identified above. Therefore no further assessment has been undertaken of the effects on the NCA 107 Cotswolds.

Local Landscape Character

4.29 A desktop study was undertaken to find relevant information on landscape character in respect of the site.

County Landscape Character

4.30 At the county level within the online Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS) the site is located within the Wooded Estatelands landscape character type (LCT). The key characteristics of the LCT are given as:

- *"Rolling topography with localised steep slopes.*
- *Large blocks of ancient woodland and mixed plantations of variable sizes.*
- *Large parklands and mansion houses.*
- *A regularly-shaped field pattern dominated by arable fields.*
- *Small villages with strong vernacular character."*

District Landscape Character

4.31 Within the 'Landscape Character Assessment for Cherwell Council' (September 2024) the site and surrounding area is located in the LCA2 Cherwell Valley landscape character area (LCA) (see **Appendix 5 – LCA2 Cherwell Valley**).

4.32 The key characteristics of the LCA 2 Cherwell Valley LCA are given as:

- The River Cherwell flows southwards through a well-defined narrow valley, joined by its main tributaries the Sor Brook and River Swere. Flat, low-lying topography with seasonally flooded alluvial floodplains is enclosed by rolling valley sides.
- Medium fields in intensive arable use on the valley sides contrast with smaller open fields used for pasture and water meadows on the floodplain.
- Transport infrastructure, including the Cherwell Valley railway line and the Oxford Canal, follows the north-south valley landform. The canal, with its associated bridges and locks, is an important feature often running parallel to the river.
- Small, often nucleated villages sit on the higher ground of the valley sides. They are largely traditional in character, with limestone common in the south and ironstone in the north. They contain a number of listed buildings, and often have designated Conservation Areas.
- The Oxford Canal Walk along the canal is the main form of access to the valley floor, which is often inaccessible. There are limited river crossings.

- There are high levels of tranquillity and relative remoteness, particularly in the south away from Banbury and Bodicote.
- Limited tree cover results in long, open views across the valley from the higher ground of the valley sides, as well as views towards higher ground from the valley floor. There are very few incongruous features, resulting in a strong rural character.

4.33 Under guidance the following is noted:

- "…*New development should respect the scale, historic form and local vernacular of each village.*
- *New development should reflect the landscape setting of villages, by not encroaching beyond any topographical, visual or environmental limits (such as beyond the valley slope onto the brow of the hill, or undermining important gaps between neighbouring villages).*
- *Where there is important open space, which forms an integral part of the character of the village, such as at Steeple Aston, this space should remain undeveloped."*

Site Character

4.34 The site is comparatively peaceful, although the site and the larger parcel of land of which it is a part have housing to the east and west. There is no public access.

4.35 The northern site boundary is undefined on the ground at present. Internally the site is mainly grassland with some trees.

Completed Character Field Survey Sheet

4.36 During the site visit, a landscape character field survey sheet was filled in to record the observed characteristics of the site and the local landscape. A photographic record was prepared also, which identifies means of enclosure within and around the site, and examples of access and planting already present within close proximity to the site (see **Appendix 6 – Completed Character Field Survey and Character Photos**).

5 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

5.1 This section describes the key components of the proposals, and the nature of the anticipated effects that are likely to occur. It then draws upon the landscape and visual baseline information and summarises key constraints and opportunities that need to be considered and incorporated within the proposals.

5.2 In summary, the proposals comprise:

- Erection of 23 dwellings, access, parking, and landscaping.

5.3 The form of the proposed development is shown at **Appendix 7 – Proposed Site Layout.**

5.4 The following section will describe how the proposals respond to the following key considerations.

- Height and Massing
- Access and Parking
- Landscaping Works

Height and Massing

5.5 The proposed dwellings are arranged on the site in a semi-formal layout that seeks to retain the existing trees on site. The proposed dwellings are proposed as a mixture of detached, semi-detached, apartment and short terrace properties. The properties are arranged in small clusters.

5.6 The majority of the dwellings would be 2 storeys in height. However, three of the dwellings are proposed as single storey properties (plots 8, 14 and 17).

Access and Parking

5.7 The proposed development will be accessed off Fenway. A new access road will pass to the east of Old Quarry House and head north-east before turning north-west. The majority of properties would be accessed off spurs/private drives leading off the main access road.

5.8 Parking would be off road, in parking areas, car ports and garages.

Landscaping Works

5.9 A landscape proposals plan has been prepared as part of the planning application submission. The proposals include landscaping sympathetic to the use and context of the site (see **Appendix 8 – Landscape Strategy**).

5.10 The proposals retain the existing trees, therefore existing features of character are retained. New trees are proposed throughout the site.

5.11 Shrub beds are proposed closer to the proposed buildings. Hedges are proposed to define property boundaries. The site will retain a large area of open grassland.

Planting

5.12 When the visual assessment of the photo views describes any screening or filtering of any assessed views, there are assumptions made in respect of proposed planting and the anticipated heights that proposed planting can be hoped to achieve.

5.13 Any tree planting will be supplied at extra heavy standard size at 14-16cm with a height at year 1 of 4-4.5m. In year 8 these trees, subject to species and external factors considerations affecting tree growth rates, be expected to reach around 6-6.5m in height and be around 8.5m high by year 15.

5.14 Any native hedge planting areas would be planted at 40-60cm at year 1, and be expected to be around 3.5m in year 8, and 5-7m in year 15, unless managed at a lesser height.

Lighting

5.15 There is no lighting information available at the time of writing, however several assumptions can be made as to the nature of the lighting required and typical for such a setting.

5.16 It is anticipated that the proposals would be fitted with minimal external lighting such as downward facing security lighting and porch lights. Nevertheless, the local planning

authority would have the ability to restrict any such external lighting by condition should the proposals gain planning consent.

5.17 There will be no requirement for obtrusive lighting features such as floodlighting. The site is well enclosed, so there will be limited outward visibility of lighting on site into the dark countryside to the west.

6 ASSESSMENT OF ANTICIPATED VISUAL EFFECTS

6.1 A visual assessment of the proposals has been undertaken to determine how the proposals would likely have a bearing on the visual amenity of the immediate vicinity of the site and the surrounding landscape/countryside. This assessment was undertaken in February 2026 when foliage was still almost entirely absent and potential visibility close to a maximum. Consideration has also been given to summer months when visibility is at a minimum owing to the presence of foliage.

6.2 A number of 8 representative viewpoints have been identified on which to base a visual assessment. The location of the viewpoints is given at **Appendix 4 – Photoview Location Plan**.

6.3 The detailed assessment of these representative viewpoints (see **Appendix 9 – Representative Views**) sets out how the baseline view will be affected visually by the proposals.

Effects Upon Visual Amenity

6.4 As illustrated within the visual assessment, the enclosed nature of the site greatly reduces the potential visual effects arising from the proposals.

6.5 There are other features that limit the outward visibility of the site:

- The site is contained by existing adjacent built form close to its southern, eastern and western boundaries that restrict views from the wider settlement and local landscape.
- Intervening vegetation and undulating topography in the surrounding countryside largely prevents views back towards the site from rights of way.

Viewpoints

6.6 The viewpoints that were taken as part of the visual assessment have been assessed at:

Year 1 - when the proposals have been built, and the access and landscaping has been installed (but not yet established or grown); and

Year 15 – When sufficient time has gone by to allow the planting to have established, and grown sufficiently to provide any softening, filtering, landscape/ecological enhancements.

6.7 The photoviews are formatted, such that if you were to hold them up at arm's length, they would be a 100% representation of the view you would see.

6.8 Visual assessment is subjective, and what one person might consider is a beneficial change, another could be of the opposite view and consider the same thing negative.

6.9 For all viewpoints, the sensitivity of the receptor is considered to be high.

Viewpoint 1

6.10 This view is taken close to the site from Fenway. The view looks north-west.

6.11 The residential property, Old Quarry House, is prominent and dominant in the view. The property screens views into the interior of the site from the highway footway. The view is representative of users of the highway.

Sensitivity of Receptor

6.12 Users of the public highway network are assessed as having a medium sensitivity to change. The view is assessed as having a medium value. Overall, the sensitivity of the visual receptor i.e. the people using the public highway is medium.

Magnitude of change

6.13 The existing residential property would be retained and would continue to screen the interior of the site. The proposed development would be almost entirely screened.

6.14 There would some change to the view generated by the construction of the new access road. However, the view would be mostly unaltered.

6.15 The magnitude of change is assessed as low.

Scale of Effect Years 1 and 15

6.16 In year 1, the scale of effect would be minor neutral. It is judged that the new access road would represent neither an improvement nor a deterioration in the view.

6.17 It is assessed that the sale of effect would remain as minor neutral at year 15.

Viewpoint 2

6.18 This view is taken from the footway to Fenway and looks south-east towards Old Quarry House and the site entrance. From this location the site is screened from view.

6.19 The view is representative of users of the highway.

Sensitivity of Receptor

6.20 Users of the public highway network are assessed as having a medium sensitivity to change. The view is assessed as having a medium value. Overall, the sensitivity of the visual receptor i.e. the people using the public highway is medium.

Magnitude of change

6.21 The proposed development would bring about no change to the view. The main part of the site would be screened by the retained property of Old Quarry Hill. The proposed entrance and new access road would be screened by existing vegetation in the intervening space between the observer and the site boundary.

Scale of Effect Years 1 and 15

6.22 With no change, the proposed development would have no effect at year 1 or year 15.

Viewpoint 3

6.23 This view is taken from public right of way 354/5/10 and looks south-west. The view looks directly into the larger parcel of land of which the site is a part.

6.24 Views of the site are screened by the layering effect of the existing woodland style planting on the larger parcel.

6.25 The view is representative of users of the public right of way network.

Sensitivity of Receptor

6.26 Users of the public of the public right of way network are assessed as having a high susceptibility to change. The view is assessed as medium value. The overall sensitivity of the visual receptor i.e. people using the right of way is high.

Magnitude of change

6.27 The proposed development would bring about no change to the view. The lattice of the existing tree vegetation would screen the proposals in both winter and summer (when leaf cover is present).

Scale of Effect Years 1 and 15

6.28 With no change, the proposed development would have no effect at year 1 or year 15.

Viewpoint 4

6.29 This view is taken from a position adjacent to the play area located at the northern end of Coneygar Fields. The view looks east from the parking area, across the play area and into the site.

6.30 The view is representative of users of the public highway (Coneygar Fields).

Sensitivity of Receptor

6.31 Users of the public highway network are assessed as having a medium sensitivity to change. The view is assessed as having a medium value. Overall, the sensitivity of the visual receptor i.e. the people using the public highway is medium.

Magnitude of change

6.32 The eastern boundary of the play area forms part of the site boundary. With the proposed development in place, some discrete built form would be seen in the middle distance. The magnitude of change is assessed as medium.

Scale of Effect Years 1 and 15

6.33 With a medium sensitivity and a medium magnitude of change, the scale of effect at year 1 would be moderate adverse. Proposed new tree and hedgerow planting on the site would be comparatively immature.

6.34 At year 15, the proposed new tree and hedgerow planting would have matured sufficient to provide additional screening to the proposed development. The scale of effect would reduce to minor adverse.

Viewpoint 5

6.35 This view is a sequential one from public right of way 354/5/10 and looks south-west into the site. The view affords a view of part of the site in the far distance, with screening to other areas by existing vegetation in the space between the observer and the site boundary.

6.36 The view is representative of users of the public right of way network.

Sensitivity of Receptor

6.37 Users of the public of the public right of way network are assessed as having a high susceptibility to change. The view is assessed as medium value. The overall sensitivity of the visual receptor i.e. people using the right of way is high.

Magnitude of change

6.38 The proposed development would be seen in part through the latticework of existing vegetation. The magnitude of change is assessed as low. The proposals would not be unduly prominent or overbearing in the view.

Scale of Effect Years 1 and 15

6.39 With a high sensitivity and a low magnitude of change, the scale of effect at year 1 is assessed as moderate adverse.

6.40 At year 15, the proposed new tree and hedgerow planting would have matured sufficient to provide additional screening to the proposed development. The scale of effect would reduce to minor adverse.

Viewpoint 6

6.41 This view is view taken from public right of way 354/4/10. For most of its length the right of way passes alongside a dense and dense and tall hedgerow that screens views of and into the site. This view is untypical as it represents a break in the hedgerow at field gate.

6.42 The field gate allows a view eastward across a paddock. However, boundary vegetation along the site's western edge prevents views into the site.

6.43 The view is representative of uses of the public right of way network.

Sensitivity of Receptor

6.44 Users of the public of the public right of way network are assessed as having a high susceptibility to change. The view is assessed as medium value. The overall sensitivity of the visual receptor i.e. people using the right of way is high.

Magnitude of change

6.45 The proposed development would be screened in both winter and summer by the retained boundary vegetation along the site's western edge. There would be no change in view.

Scale of Effect Years 1 and 15

6.46 With no change, the proposed development would have no effect at year 1 or year 15.

Viewpoint 7

6.47 This view is taken from the A4260 Oxford Road. The view is an elevated one that looks west over arable fields towards Steeple Aston and the site.

6.48 The view is representative of users of the public highway and is a transitory one, glimpsed through a break in the roadside hedgerow that otherwise screens views of the wider landscape from the road.

6.49 The site is not readily distinguishable, set amongst what at this distance appears to be woodland. Some existing built form can be seen on the edge of Steeple Aston and in particular in Coneygar Fields.

6.50 The view is representative of users of the public highway.

Sensitivity of Receptor

6.51 Users of the public highway network are assessed as having a medium sensitivity to change. The view is assessed as having a medium value. Overall, the sensitivity of the visual receptor i.e. the people using the public highway is medium.

Magnitude of change

6.52 The magnitude of change is assessed as negligible. There is the potential for some built form to be seen on the site through the trees but only discrete elements.

Scale of Effect Years 1 and 15

6.53 With a negligible magnitude of change and a medium sensitivity, there would be a negligible neutral scale of change at year 1 and year 15.

Viewpoint 8

6.54 This view is taken from Fenway at the entrance to the site looking north. Views into the site beyond the proposed access road are largely screened by built form and existing vegetation.

6.55 The view is representative of users of the highway.

Sensitivity of Receptor

6.56 Users of the public highway network are assessed as having a medium sensitivity to change. The view is assessed as having a medium value. Overall, the sensitivity of the visual receptor i.e. the people using the public highway is medium.

Magnitude of change

6.57 The magnitude of change is assessed as medium. The new access road will be seen, and some built form will be visible on the main part of the site.

Scale of Effect Years 1 and 15

6.58 With a medium sensitivity and a medium magnitude of change, the scale of effect at year 1 will be moderate adverse.

6.59 At year 15, growth of trees and hedgerows implemented as part of the proposed development would have established and filled out sufficiently so as to provide additional screening. The scale of effect would diminish to minor adverse.

Summary

6.60 A summary of the visual effects is tabulated at **Appendix 10 – Summary of Visual Effects**.

Effects Upon Residential Properties

6.61 With the proposed development in place, there will be some direct views of the proposals from residential properties in close proximity to the site boundary, in particular from those properties on the western side of Grange Park and from properties on the eastern edge of Coneygar Fields.

6.62 Views of the proposed development will typically be from the rear elevation of a particular property. Views from gardens and lower ground floors would be restricted by garden boundary treatments and garden plus boundary vegetation.

6.63 It is judged that the scale of effect on the visual amenity of the adjacent residential properties would be moderate adverse overall at year 1. This would reduce to minor

adverse at year 15 once mitigation planting has filled out sufficiently so as to provide further screening.

7 EFFECTS UPON LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS AND CHARACTER

7.1 In the context of the proposals described within the previous section. This section sets out an assessment of the likely physical landscape effects upon the site and the anticipated landscape effects upon the character of the relevant landscape character area of the site and its immediate context.

Likely causes of effects

7.2 Although any landscape has some intrinsic sensitivity, different landscapes contain a range of components which will respond differently to change, subject to the type and nature of the proposals. Therefore, in order to inform the analysis of effects, judgements should be made with reference to the specific changes which arise from the type and nature of proposals being considered.

7.3 The following section sets out the likely causes of effects which would occur in relation to the proposals for the site.

Causes of temporary effects during construction

7.4 The temporary construction work which may give rise to effects on landscape and visual receptors are listed as follows:

- Site clearance and setting out;
- Movement and presence of associated construction vehicles;
- Presence of materials storage and machinery storage on site during construction;
- Installation of tree protection barriers to protect boundary vegetation;
- Installation of the security fencing;
- Construction of the new dwellings, garages and associated structures;
- Construction of new access/spine road;
- Installations of planting proposals and landscaping.

7.5 Tree protection measures (Heras barriers) will be erected prior to site construction works. All of these measures will be temporary in nature.

Causes of effects at completion

7.6 The permanent components of the proposals which may give rise to effects on landscape and visual receptors are listed as follows;

- New buildings and structures;
- Installation of the accessway and access road/driveways; and
- Installations of planting proposals and landscaping integrated into the proposals (e.g. grassland areas, native hedge planting etc).

7.7 Effects at completion are concerned with the long-term alteration in the landscape from the current site context, to the future scenario with the proposals in place. The building work, access road, driveways and associated planting will have been completed and will be a permanent component in the landscape.

7.8 In the long term, effects will be associated with the influence of mitigation measures upon landscape character. This establishes the changes to landscape character as a result of proposed mitigation measures/planting fully established and performing their intended function. The effects are considered to be long term and not reversible.

7.9 In terms of physical landscape resources, the direct changes will be restricted to the site only.

7.10 Overall, the physical landscape effects are considered to be direct and will be limited to the extent of the site. There will be no additional direct effects on the wider areas around the site or to the wider landscape context of the local character area.

Effects Upon Landscape Elements

7.11 This section assesses the effect of the proposals on the elements and features that currently characterise the site.

7.12 In the following paragraphs effects will be assessed at:

Year 1 - when building work has been completed, and any landscape planting has been installed (but not yet established or grown); and

Year 15 – When sufficient time has gone by to allow any landscaping interventions such as hedging, trees and grassland to have established etc, and grown sufficiently to provide any screening, filtering, landscape/ecological enhancements.

Topography

7.13 Topographically, the proposed development will not alter the underlying grain of the existing topography. The site has a level profile conducive to construction. It is not anticipated that the proposals would require any large cut and fill exercises that would fundamentally alter the key character of the topography.

7.14 As is current practice, it is expected that the existing topsoil on site would be removed during the initial construction phase. Changes to the site topography would be localised such as marrying in thresholds and kerbing to existing levels etc. Such changes may be permanent ones. Others would be made good. Once the majority of the construction activity has finished, topsoil would be returned to the site and respread.

7.15 The greatest permanent change to the site topography would be through the construction of the proposed attenuation basin and any swales.

Value and Sensitivity

7.16 The topography of the site is assessed as having a low susceptibility to the type of development proposed, with a low value. The topography is not rare or unusual in the local context. The overall sensitivity of the site topography is therefore low.

Magnitude of Change

7.17 The magnitude of change to the fundamental character of the sites topography is assessed as being low.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

7.18 With a low magnitude of change, and a low sensitivity, the scale of effect is considered to amount to negligible neutral.

Trees and Hedgerows

7.19 The proposed development would retain the majority of the existing tree and hedgerow resource on the site. New tree and native species hedgerow are proposed across the site. The scale of proposed planting would mitigate for any losses but would also provide a net addition of trees and hedgerows to the site, strengthening and greatly enhancing the retained tree and hedgerow resource.

Value and Sensitivity

7.20 Trees and hedgerows are considered highly susceptible to building development if they are not suitably protected as part of any site construction works.

7.21 The value of the vegetation on arboricultural grounds is considered to be medium.

7.22 Overall, the existing tree and hedgerow resource on the site is assessed as having a high sensitivity.

Magnitude of Change

7.23 Retention of the majority of the existing tree and hedgerow resource together with the planting of new trees and hedgerows would lead to a medium magnitude of change at year 1 to the existing tree and hedgerow resource.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

7.24 With a high sensitivity and a medium magnitude of change, the scale of effect at year 1 would be major. The proposed new tree and hedgerow planting would be comparatively immature. The nature of the effect would be neutral.

7.25 At year 15, the new tree and hedgerow planting implemented as part of the proposed development would be fully established and would have filled out. The retained trees and hedgerow would be under an agreed management regime ensuing their long term healthy retention. At this point it is judged that the scale of effect would alter to major beneficial in respect of the site's tree and hedgerow resource.

Public rights of way (PRoW)

7.26 There are no rights of way running through the site, and the proposals do not directly require the alteration of any rights of way. There would therefore be no direct physical effect to any public rights of way.

7.27 Any potential effects on users of the local PRoW network are considered under section 6 'Effects on Visual Amenity'.

Watercourses and waterbodies

7.28 There are no obvious watercourses or waterbodies on or near the site and therefore no effect.

Effects Upon Landscape Character

7.29 The baseline section of this report identifies which national character area and which local character area the site sites within. The sensitivities and characteristics of the local character area are identified and are useful in terms of setting out key elements of landscape and visual character.

7.30 There are several ways any proposals can affect a character area, either physically by building on it, or visually, by being highly visible to large parts of a character area and thus eroding it visually.

7.31 It is typical to assess the proposals against the local character areas, or the character of the immediate context.

7.32 The proposed development is not physically big enough nor visually prominent enough to have any meaningful effect on either the national nor the local character areas as a whole.

Landscape Value

7.33 The Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact (GLVIA 3), at Box 5.1, together with the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21set out a range of factors that can help in the identification of valued landscapes. These factors include:

- Landscape quality (condition);
- Scenic quality;
- Rarity;
- Representativeness;
- Conservation Interests;
- Recreation Value;
- Perceptual aspects; and
- Associations.

7.34 The table below seeks to assess the value of the site and its host landscape based on the above factors.

Assessment of Landscape Value of the Site and its Environs

Criteria	Assessment of Value
Landscape quality (condition)	**Medium.** The site is not within a nationally important landscape in terms of the NPPF. The site is considered to be in a fair condition reflective of its current state as primarily managed grassland. The landscape around the site is considered to be in a fair to good condition.
Scenic quality	**Low.** The site, separate from the larger land parcel of which it is a part has little inherent scenic quality. The site is small, secluded and devoid of any remarkable features that would elevate its status. The wider local landscape has aesthetic and visual interest.
Rarity	**Low.** The site has no rare or unusual features within its boundary. The wider local area around contains few examples of rare landscape. The site contains some variable quality trees which are typical of the area.
Representativeness	**Low.** The site owing to its size and scale does not possess any of the key characteristics of the published character assessment. Similarly, the local host landscape possesses only a few of the characteristics identified in the published character assessment.

Conservation Interest	**Low.** The site is not recognised as having historic conservation interest. The Steeple Aston Conservation Area boundary extends along Fenway to the south of the site entrance.
Recreational value	**Low.** The site is entirely private and, without general public access, has no recreational value. The site's immediate environs do have public rights of way passing through and does have some recreational value.
Perceptual qualities	**Low.** The site affords only a restricted amount of intervisibility with the surrounding area.
Associations	**Low.** There is no known direct association with any historic or cultural figure and the site or the area immediately surrounding the site.

7.35 Having considered the various factors given in the above table, it is assessed that the landscape of the site is of low value. The susceptibility of the site to the type of development being proposed is judged to be medium – part of the site will remain undeveloped, the existing tree resource on the site will be largely retained and the site topography substantially unaltered. Overall, the sensitivity of the site is judged to be low.

7.36 The value of the local landscape is assessed of medium value. The site is immediately adjacent the built edge of Steeple Aston and built form as an influence on the site. The proposed development would bring about no physical change to the landscape elements and features of the local landscape. The susceptibility of the local landscape to the the type of development being proposed is judged to be low. Overall, the sensitivity of the local area is judged to be low.

Assessment of the Effects on Landscape Character

7.37 At the finer grain level of assessment, as expressed in the published landscape character assessment, the site and its immediate environs demonstrate few of the wider landscape's key characteristics.

7.38 The site does contribute slightly to the wider landscape through the presence of its existing tree resource but primarily those on its western boundary. Nevertheless the site has no noted features of the published character assessment. The site has no public access, nor is afforded any designations which elevate its status.

7.39 There would be a noticeable change to the appearance and character of the site with the proposed development in place. The proposals would. Introduce built form and domestic/residential uses onto the site where none current exist. Nevertheless, the proposals would be set within a retained framework of existing trees. The latter would be enhanced through new tree and hedgerow planting.

7.40 Outward visibility of the proposed development would be minimal and limited to a few publicly accessible locations in close proximity to the site boundary. The proposals for new tree planting on the site can be expected to further restrict outward visibility once established, such that the proposed development would remain discreet in the landscape and streetscape.

7.41 The physical characteristics of the local landscape beyond the site would remain unchanged with the proposed development in place. The existing characteristics of the local landscape would all continue to prevail with the proposals in place.

7.42 The pattern of settlement would not fundamentally alter with the proposed development in place on the site. Steeple Aston has an erratic settlement form and edge. Existing residential at Grange Park, to the east of the site, and Coneygar to the west already extend northwards from Fenway. The proposed development would be similar and would not perceptibly intrude or encroach into the countryside.

7.43 The proposed development would have only a limited effect on experiential factors such as tranquillity and visual appearance. The proposed development would be experienced in the context of other existing adjacent residential development.

7.44 The proposals would not be a noticeable source of light pollution or noise generation. It is considered that any change to the perceived level of tranquillity in the vicinity of the site would be largely imperceptible; reflective of the scale of the proposed development, and the presence of other existing domestic/residential uses and roads in the immediate surrounding landscape.

7.45 The site is situated amongst other sources of light. In respect of night time effects, the proposed development would not introduce any noticeable new light sources that erode or negatively impact a dark night sky.

7.46 Any change in the visual appearance of the site would not substantially alter the material perception of the local host landscape as being well settled.

7.47 The local landscape already accommodates a variety of examples of built form along the Fenway. In this context, the sight of the proposed development would not unduly affect the visual experience, appearance or perception of the landscape's character nor the character experience of the Fenway.

7.48 The proposals have included various positive design interventions, such as the retention of existing features, a mix of single storey and two storey houses and set back from the site boundary. The choice of materials and landscaping would all emulate local character and help assimilate the dwellings into their setting.

Magnitude of Change

7.49 The magnitude of change that would be brought to the character of the site by the proposed development would be high.

7.50 The magnitude of change that would be brought to the character of the local landscape of with the proposed development in place is assessed as low.

Scale of Effect at Year 1 and Tear 15

7.51 With a high magnitude of change and a low sensitivity, the scale of effect on the landscape character of the site at year 1 would be moderate adverse. Ay year 15, the proposed soft landscaping would have fully established and filled out sufficiently so as to enhance the setting of the proposals. The scale of effect would diminish to minor adverse.

7.52 With a low magnitude of change and an overall low sensitivity, the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the local landscape is assessed as negligible at year 1.

7.53 By year 15, the establishment and filling out of any proposed would help assimilate the proposals into the landscape. Such landscape proposals would also bring about positive landscape benefits which accord with the guidelines for mitigation and enhancement in the local character area guidelines.

7.54 It is assessed that the scale of the effect on the local landscape would be change to negligible neutral over time.

National and Local Plan Policies relevant to landscape and character

7.55 The credentials of the proposals will be assessed against the how design interventions accord with best practice guidance, national and local plan policies relevant to character, landscape and visual, and green infrastructure.

National Policy - NPPF

7.56 Neither the site nor the surrounding area contain or are within any protected landscape such as National Landscape (AONB) or national Park.

7.57 The proposed development is located in a visually well contained site. The character of both the site and the site environs are influenced by comparatively existing residential development. The proposed development would not be incongruous in character terms in such a context.

7.58 The proposed development retains where possible the existing tree resource on the site. The retained tree resource, and the treed character of the site are to be enhanced through new tree planting across the site, including trees along the proposed access road/street.

7.59 The proposed development would enhance the character of the site through the introduction of new hedgerows, which would function to provided screening and spatial definition.

7.60 The proposed development includes for new green infrastructure by providing open space capable of being used for multiple activities including passive recreation, SUDS and habitat creation.

Local Plan Policy ESD

7.61 A visual assessment has demonstrated that the proposed development would bring about very little visual intrusion into the open countryside. There would be no harm to any important natural landscape features and the existing topography of the site would be substantially unaltered.

7.62 The site is located on the edge of settlement and is not situated in an area of high tranquillity. Changes to the amount of activity, noise and light from the proposals would be barely perceptible in the context of the existing adjacent residential development. The proposed development would bring about no undue harm to the setting of Steeple Aston.

7.63 New tree and hedgerow planting would help to reinforce and enhance the existing tree cover on the site. Both new and existing retained vegetation would be managed to ensure its long term, healthy, survival.

Local Policy ESD15

7.64 The proposed development would complement the existing character of the local area and would respect the existing pattern of settlement, routes and streets. The proposals

are outline at this stage but are intended to use materials and architectural detailing that would reference the existing local vernacular.

7.65 The proposed development on the site avoids any important skylines, valley floors , noteworthy trees, important views and important landscape features. The majority of the existing tree resource on the site, which helps give the site and immediate environs a distinctive character, would be retained. The existing tree resource would be strengthened and enhanced through new tree and hedgerow planting.

Summary

7.66 In summary, the proposals accord with the objectives and policies of the Local Plan in respect of landscape and visual matters. In this regard, the proposals will retain important features of character, and include new measures that will enhance the character of the site and how it is perceived from the wider area.

8 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

8.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal has assessed the landscape and visual effects of the proposed development including its associated landscaping. The proposals have been carefully sited and designed and include sufficient mitigation measures to ensure that there would be no major adverse effects arising from the proposed development in the medium to long term.

8.2 The proposals include tree retention and new landscape planting. New landscaping are regarded as a betterment of the site and would accord with the aspirations for mitigation and enhancement given in the local character assessment guidelines.

8.3 The site is contained by established trees and hedges which form the boundaries of the site and the larger landscape parcel of which it is a part. Other than the established trees and hedges there are no identified landscape features or elements of great rarity or value relating to the site.

8.4 It is evident from this assessment that the visual envelope associated with the proposed development would be localised. The majority of the surrounding landscape would be completely unaffected visually should the proposals for the site take place.

8.5 The surrounding built form and intervening vegetation and rolling topography would limit the outward effect the proposed development would have on the surrounding landscape. Where initial adverse visual effects occur the existing landscape structure together with new tree and hedge planting would soften and integrate the proposed development and reduce any medium/long term residual effects.

8.6 The proposed development includes landscape planting, and would adopt a built form layout and character for the proposed development that emulates other similar scale residential developments that are already present in and a characteristic of the wider local landscape and settlement.

8.7 Provided that the landscape enhancements proposed are implemented, the proposals has the capacity to deliver a high-quality development that is anchored to its setting and sensitive to its context, without giving rise to any notable or important landscape and visual or effects.

APPENDIX 1: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

1. The Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been undertaken with reference to best practice, as outlined in the following published guidance:

    - Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd edition) - Landscape Institute/ Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013)

    - An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (2014) Natural England

Professional Judgement

2. LVIAs differ from other specialist studies because they are generally undertaken by professionals who are also involved in the design of the landscape and the preparation of subsequent management proposals. This allows the landscape assessment to proceed as an integral part of the overall scheme design rather than a discrete study carried out once the proposals have been finalised.

3. Professional judgement is a very important part of the LVIA process. Whilst there is scope for quantitative measurement of some interrelating elements (e.g. the loss of trees), much of the landscape assessment will rely on qualitative judgements that involve a degree of subjective opinion (e.g. the assessment of landscape values or what effect proposals will have on visual amenity).

4. Professional judgements are therefore based on both training/qualification and experience and are supported by clear evidence and a reasoned judgement. Accordingly, it is recommended that suitably qualified and experienced professionals carry out the LVIAs.

5. The assessment of landscape and visual effects is based on the professional judgement of a chartered landscape architect with over 13+ years' experience of undertaking landscape and visual impact assessments for projects at varying scales at complexities.

Landscape Baseline

6. The initial step in the landscape assessment is to establish the baseline landscape conditions, to determine the current elements and character of the landscape within and surrounding the site. This involved an initial desktop study of but not necessarily limited to:

    - The review of published Landscape Character Assessments;
    - The review of planning policies relevant to landscape;
    - Use of Ordnance survey maps at 1:50,000, 1:25,000 scales;
    - Use of Aerial photographs of the site and surrounding area;
    - Review of and use of datasets for rural designations from the MAGIC website (Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside);
    - Describing the existing landscape elements that contribute to landscape character, such as trees and vegetation, topography, settlement pattern, public rights of way, land use, waterbodies; and
    - Visual observations in the field – completing a character sheet during the site visit to note any visual detractors or visual qualities, the unity, level of activity, key characteristics, sense of enclosure, tranquillity etc.

Identification of Receptors

7. Once the landscape and visual baseline information about the receiving landscape has been collated this can be understood and described with an understanding of the details of the proposed change or development that is to be introduced into the receiving landscape to identify and describe the landscape effects.

8. The first step is to identify the elements and components of the landscape that are likely to be affected by the proposals referred to as landscape receptors. Potentially sensitive landscape receptors may include:

    - Physical influences on the constituent elements of the landscape (e.g. landform, topography and waterbodies);
    - Land cover of the landscape (e.g. the different types of trees and vegetation and patterns/types of tree cover);

- Influences of human activity on the landscape (e.g. the land use and its management, the character of settings and buildings and the patterns and types of fields and enclosures);

- Aesthetic or perceptual qualities of the landscape (e.g. its scale, its complexity, its openness, its tranquillity or its wildness); and

- The character of the landscape (i.e. any distinctive landscape character types or areas that can be identified), which may include published character assessment reports and / or defined character areas identified as part of the assessment process.

Identification of likely landscape effects

9. The second step is to identify interactions between the landscape receptors and the different elements/components of the development at the different stages, such as construction and operational stages.

10. Potential landscape effects that could occur during the construction and operational periods may include, but are not restricted to, the following;

    - Changes to landscape elements: the addition of new elements or the removal of existing landscape elements;

    - Changes to landscape qualities: degradation or erosion of landscape elements and patterns and perceptual characteristics, particularly those that form key characteristic elements of defined landscape character types or areas, or contribute to the landscape value; and

    - Changes to landscape character: landscape character may be affected through the incremental effect on characteristic elements, landscape patterns and qualities and the cumulative addition of new features, the magnitude of which is sufficient to alter the overall landscape character of a particular area.

Sensitivity of the receptor likely to be affected

11. For each of the landscape and visual effects identified the susceptibility of the landscape receptor to a specific change is to be judged as to is the value attached to the landscape and visual receptor. These two judgements are combined to determine the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptor. The sensitivity and the judgements on susceptibility and value will be fully described for each of the receptors.

Landscape Effects

Landscape Susceptibility

12. Susceptibility to change means the ability of the landscape receptor (whether it be the overall character or quality/ condition of a particular area, or individual element and/ or feature) to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and / or the achievement of the landscape planning policies and strategies.

13. In this context, the term landscape receptors can be expanded to cover character areas, particular landscape character types or an individual landscape element (such as trees/vegetation and topography) or feature. Landscape susceptibility will vary in response to the specific landscape that is being considered and to the nature or type of change that may occur.

14. Judgements about the susceptibility of a landscape receptor to change will be recorded as being high, medium or low.

Trees/vegetation

15. Trees are considered **highly susceptible** to development if they aren't protected as part of any site works.

Topography

Table 1: Topography Susceptibility –

Low	Flat land/ slightly undulating topography Many references to the type of topography within the local area Topography can easily accommodate the type of development proposed
Medium	Gently undulating/undulating land Some references to the type of topography within the local area Topography can accommodate the type of development proposed with minor regrading or localised cut and fill exercises

High	Steep/very steep topography in a hilly/mountainous area Few or no references to the type of topography within the local area Topography cannot easily accommodate the type of development proposed with major cut and fill exercises

The following table sets out the criteria that have been considered for determining overall landscape susceptibility.

Table 2: Landscape Susceptibility –

Low	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a high capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed due to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover and built form. The landscape is small scale and / or has a high level of containment, resulting in only a slight degree of interaction between landform, topography, vegetation cover, field pattern and built form. Nature of land use – landscapes with extensive existing reference or context to the type of proposed development. Nature of existing elements – landscapes with few / no landscape characteristics / elements / features of value are present or, where they are present, they can easily be replaced / substituted and / or loss could be satisfactorily compensated for. Nature of existing features – landscapes where detracting features or major infrastructure is present and the influence of these on the landscape is dominant. Several detractors present which have a negative influence on the character and / or experience of the landscape. Very good opportunities for mitigation and enhancement.
Medium	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a medium capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed due to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover and built form. The landscape is of a medium scale and / or there is a moderate level of containment, resulting in a moderate degree of interaction between landform, topography, vegetation cover, field pattern and built form. Nature of land use – landscapes with some existing reference or context to the type of proposed development. Nature of existing elements – Existing landscape characteristics / elements / features of limited value and could potentially be replaced / substituted, and / or loss satisfactorily compensated for. Nature of existing features – Some detracting features and / or major infrastructure are present in the area, and these have a noticeable influence on the character and experience of the landscape. Good potential for mitigation and enhancement.

High	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a low capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed due to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover and built form. The landscape is of a large scale and / or there is a low level of containment, resulting in a high degree of interaction between landform, topography, vegetation cover, field pattern and built form. Nature of land use – landscapes with no or very little existing reference or context to the type of proposed development. Nature of existing elements – Many of the existing landscape characteristics / elements / features of value would not be easy to replace or substitute, and it is unlikely that loss could be compensated for. Nature of existing features – Few detracting features in the area and where present, these have little influence on the character and experience of the landscape Some potential for mitigation and enhancement.

Landscape Value

16. Landscape value is the relative value attached to a potentially affected landscape. Landscape value will vary in relation to the different stakeholders and different parts of society that use or experience a landscape.

17. Landscape value is not solely indicated by the presence of formal designations and a range of factors influence landscape value. Factors that have been considered in making judgements on landscape value include designations (both national and local), local planning documents, status of features (e.g. TPO's or Conservation Areas) and local community and interests (for example local green spaces, village greens or allotments).

18. Landscape value will vary in response to the specific landscape that is being considered in relation to its condition, sense of seclusion or isolation, the presence or absence of detracting features and the presence or absence of rare or distinctive elements and features and to what degree these form key characteristics.

19. Judgements about the value of a landscape receptor will be recorded as being High, Medium, or Low based on the information gathered in the landscape baseline (such as landscape quality (condition), scenic quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interests, recreation value, perceptual aspects and associations.

The following table sets out the criteria that have been considered for determining landscape value.

Table 3: Landscape Value –

Low	Ones that have no or little rarity make no and/or make only a limited contribution to the character and local visual and amenity value and/or be of such poor condition that it has lost its ability to contribute effectively to the character of the landscape. Fair to poor representation of landscape area / type / characteristics and common. No formal designations but a landscape of local relevance (including, but not limited to, public or semi-public open spaces, village greens or allotments) and also green infrastructure and open paces within residential areas likely to be visited and valued by the local community. Landscape condition is poor and components are generally poorly maintained or damaged. Several detractors present. The quality / qualities of, and / or features in, the landscape are unlikely to be a reason for visiting. Little or no contribution to public amenity, access and recreation. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and presence / absence of major infrastructure, the landscape has limited levels of tranquillity. Rare or distinctive elements and features are not a notable component that contribute to the character of the area.
Medium	Designated areas at a Regional or County level (including, but not limited to, green belt, regional scale parks, designated as open space or a Conservation Area in local planning documents) and also considered a distinctive component or the region/county character experienced by a large proportion of its population. Good to fair representation of landscape area / type / characteristics but common. Landscape condition is fair and components are generally relatively well maintained. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and presence / absence of major infrastructure, the landscape has moderate levels of tranquillity. Rare or distinctive elements and features are a notable component that contribute to the character of the area. Some detractors present. The quality / qualities of, and / or features in, the landscape are unlikely to be one of the main reasons for the visit, but make a positive contribution to the experience. Important contribution to local public amenity, access and recreation e.g. well-used public rights of way, green open spaces, common land. Ones that are notable in the landscape, with some visual and/or amenity interest but that do not make a particularly strong or important contribution to the character of the landscape or ones that are an intrinsic element of landscape but in poor condition.

High	Designated areas at an International or National level (including, but not limited to, World Heritage Site, National Parks, AONB's) and also considered an important component of the country's character, experienced by high numbers of tourists. Very good representation of landscape area / type / characteristics and / or uncommon. Landscape condition is good and components are generally regularly maintained to a high standard. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and presence / absence of major infrastructure, the landscape has an elevated level of tranquillity. Rare or distinctive elements and features are a key component that contribute to the character of the area. Negligible / few detractors present. The quality / qualities of, and / or features in, the landscape are likely to be one of the main reasons for the visit. Important contribution to wider public amenity, access and recreation e.g. long-distance / themed trails, well-used public rights of way, Heritage Coast, Public Open Space / Local Green Space. May be protected by / subject of planning policy.

Table 4: Value of Topography –

Low	Topography that is typical of the immediate and wider area with many references to the same type of topography Topography that doesn't have any historic or cultural associations Topography that doesn't feature any associated features such as depressions, undulations, ridge and furrow, watercourses, waterbodies Topography that isn't noted as being a prominent or notable feature within the published character area
Medium	Topography that is typical of the immediate and wider area with some references to the same type of topography Topography that does have some historic or cultural associations Topography that does feature some/localised associated features such as depressions, undulations, ridge and furrow, watercourses, waterbodies Topography that has several notable features within the published character area
High	Topography which is not typical of the immediate and wider area with few references to the same type of topography Topography which is typical of the immediate and wider area with many references to the same type of topography and does have additional attributes and associations

	Topography that does have many historic or cultural associations Topography that does feature many associated features such as depressions, undulations, steep terrain, ridge and furrow, watercourses, waterbodies Topography that is noted as being prominent or key features within the published character area

Note: the presence of ridge and furrow is considered high value, but will be assessed separately from overall landform of a site.

Table 5: Value of Trees and areas of vegetation –

Low	Trees and vegetation are either all or **mostly** categorized as **Low quality** (Category C and U) in line with BS: 5837; and Site contains **very few Medium** quality (Category B) trees/vegetation and/or Trees and vegetation **not designated** as part of a SSSI, wildlife site or TPO – no planning or ecological designations
Medium	Trees and vegetation are **either all or mostly** categorized as **Medium** quality (Category B) in line with BS: 5837; and Site contains **some Low Quality** (Category C) trees/vegetation and **very few High** quality (Category B) trees/vegetation and/or Trees and vegetation are **partly or wholly designated** as part of a SSSI, wildlife site or TPO
High	Trees and vegetation are **either all or mostly** categorized as **High quality** (Category A) in line with BS: 5837; and Site contains **some Low Quality** (Category C) trees/vegetation and **some Medium quality** (Category B) trees/vegetation and/or Trees and vegetation **are designated** as part of a SSSI, wildlife site or TPO

Sensitivity

20. The sensitivity attributed to a landscape element, a view, or character is determined by a combination of;

    - the value that is attached to a particular landscape element feature; and

- and the susceptibility of the landscape element/feature to changes that would arise as a result of the Proposed Development as outlined in pages 88-90 of GLVIA3.

21. Therefore, landscape sensitivity is assessed combining judgements on the value attached to a landscape and the susceptibility to the type of change and nature of the development proposed.

Landscape Sensitivity

22. Landscape sensitivity is a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor. Receptors can include specific elements or features or may be judged at a wider scale and include landscape character parcels, types or areas.

23. Having considered in detail the contributing factors to landscape value and the susceptibility of the site and surrounding area to the type of the development proposed, conclusions on landscape sensitivity can be drawn by balancing the judgements on value and susceptibility.

Table 6: Sensitivity of Topography -

	VALUE			
SUSCEPTIBILITY		**HIGH**	**MEDIUM**	**LOW**
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Low	Low

Table 7: Sensitivity of Trees and Vegetation -

	VALUE			
SUSCEPTIBILITY		**HIGH**	**MEDIUM**	**LOW**
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Low	Low

Table 8: Sensitivity of Landscape Character

	VALUE			
SUSCEPTIBILITY		**HIGH**	**MEDIUM**	**LOW**
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Low	Low

Magnitude of Change

24. The magnitude of change is determined through a range of considerations particular to each effect receptor and effect. In line with the GLVIA, the main attributes considered are:

Size/Scale of Change

The considerations set out in GLVIA 3 are summarised as follows:

- The extent to which the removal or addition of landscape features alters the existing landscape character;
- The degree to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are altered by removal of features e.g. hedgerows and/or the introduction of new features e.g. buildings; and

- Consideration of whether the effect changes the key characteristics of the landscape which are critical to its distinctive character.

Geographical Extent

25. This is distinct from the size or scale of effect and a range of scales that typically apply are listed below:

    - Large scale effects influencing several landscape types or character areas;
    - Effects at the scale of the landscape type or character areas within which the proposal lies;
    - Effects within the immediate landscape setting of the site;
    - Effects at the site level (within the development site itself); and
    - Effects only experienced on parts of the site at a very localised level.

Duration and reversibility

26. These are separate but linked considerations. Duration is judged according to the defined terms set out in below. Reversibility is a judgement about the prospects and practicality of the particular effect being reversed in, for example, a generation. The categories used in this assessment are set out below.

Duration:

- Long term (20 years+)
- Medium to long term (10 to 20 years)
- Medium term (5 to 10 years)
- Short term (1 year to 5 years)
- Temporary (less than 12 months)

Reversibility:

- Permanent with unlikely restoration to original state e.g. major road corridor, power station, urban extension etc;

- Permanent with possible conversion to original state e.g. agricultural buildings, retail units;
- Partially reversible to a different state e.g. mineral workings;
- Reversible after decommissioning to a similar original state e.g. wind energy development; and
- Quickly reversible e.g. temporary structures.

27. With regard to Reversibility, GLVIA 3 explains that where developments have a limited life and could eventually be removed and/or the land reinstated the effects could be considered reversible. The reversibility and consideration of temporary effects is however linked to the duration of that effect such as short term (0-5yrs), medium term (5-10 yrs) and long term (20yrs).

28. For the purpose of this assessment impacts that would be considered permanent are those typically occurring over the long term, such as the construction of buildings and reprofiling of land as these cannot practicably be reversed. Vegetation removal is also considered to be permanent where it cannot be planted in the same location and reach maturity over the short or medium term. Mitigation planting has the potential to compensate for the loss of existing vegetation if similar types and species are planted and could provide similar benefits over the medium to long term. There are instances where mitigation planting could not compensate for the loss of existing vegetation such as the removal of Ancient Woodland or instances where there are rare species which form a unique habitat.

29. Temporary effects would typically occur over a short to medium term duration and would mainly occur during the construction period. Development that may result in temporary effects would typically include the introduction of temporary site security fencing, temporary hard standing areas, construction machinery, temporary buildings and compounds, haul roads, earthmoving and stockpiles, lighting etc.

30. The characteristics of the proposals and the nature of landscape and visual effects arising will vary throughout the different phases of the lifecycle of the project. LVIA undertaken as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required to include an assessment of effects at different stages of the life-cycle of the development, and commonly includes:

- Construction effects; and

- Operational Effects (often including Year 1 and Year 15 effects such that mitigation is considered).

31. Year 1 considers the effects of the development upon completion of the construction phase. The assessment of landscape and visual effects at Year 15 takes into account any proposed mitigation measures, including planting. The assessment undertaken at Year 15 assumes that planting proposals have established and grown sufficiently to become effective. For the purposes of LVIAs Year 15 effects are also considered to be the 'residual effects' of the proposals.

32. Judgements about the magnitude of impact on landscape receptors will identify whether the impact will be negative (adverse) or positive (beneficial) and will be recorded as being large, medium, small, negligible or no change, based on the criteria set out in Table 3.

Magnitude of Change on Landscape Elements and Features

33. Professional judgement has been used to determine the magnitude of direct physical impacts on individual existing landscape elements and features as follows:

Table 9: Criteria for magnitude of change for topography and landform

No change	No change to existing topography of the site
Negligible	**Very small** change to existing site topography across a small part of the site **Very small** change to existing site topography across the entire site Development within a **very small** part of the site on the whole **Very few small/no** SuDS basins/ very few/no swales **No cut and fill exercises** **Unnoticeable change** to baseline topography
Low	**Small** change to existing site topography across a small part of the site **Small** change to existing site topography across the entire site **Multiple** small sized SuDS basins/ few swales **No cut and fill exercises** Development within a **small part** of the site on the whole **Small change** to baseline topography

Medium	**Medium** change to existing site topography across the entire site Development within a **half of** the site on the whole **Multiple** medium sized SuDS basins/ multiple swales **Localized cut and fill exercises** **Medium change** to baseline topography
High	**Large** change to existing site topography across the entire site Development within a **majority** the site on the whole **Multiple** large sized SuDS basins/ lots of swales **Major cut and fill exercises** **Major change** to baseline topography
Very high	**Very large** change to existing site topography across the entire site Development within a **vast majority** of the site on the whole **Lots of** large sized SuDS basins/ lots of swales **Major cut and fill exercises** **Major change** to baseline topography

Table 10: Criteria for magnitude of change for existing trees and vegetation

No change	**No** trees removed **All** existing trees/areas of vegetation retained and protected
Negligible	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered **very low** **Very small loss** of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall Geographical extent of removals would substantially influence the landscape of the site only The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered very small A very small amount of new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site

Low	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered l**ow** **Small loss** of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall Geographical extent of removals would influence the landscape in the immediate setting of the site, i.e. limited to the influence of part of a single landscape character area/type The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered small A small amount of new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site
Medium	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered **moderate** **Moderate loss** of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall Geographical extent of removals would influence the landscape at a local scale, i.e. a single landscape character area/type (or potentially multiple areas/types where a site is located on the boundary between areas) The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered moderate A medium amount of new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site
High	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered **high** **Majority loss** of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered large A large amount of new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site
Very high	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered **very high** **Total loss** of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall

	Geographical extent of removals would have a substantial influence on the landscape at a regional scale, i.e. across several landscape character areas/types The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered very large Significant new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site

Table 11: Criteria for magnitude of change for landscape character

High	Major alteration to, or complete loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition The size, scale and / or geographical extent of change is considered very large due to the extent and proportion of loss of, or change to, existing landscape components Effects likely to be experienced at a very large scale, influencing several character areas or types Major alteration to, or complete loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition, and / or the addition of highly uncharacteristic, conspicuous elements, features and / activities, would result in major alteration to, or complete loss of, aesthetic and / or perceptual qualities
Medium	Partial alteration to, or loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition The size, scale and / or geographical extent of change is considered medium due to the extent and proportion of loss of, or change to, existing landscape components Effects likely to be experienced at a moderate scale, influencing the character type within which the change is proposed but at a local level within the immediate setting of the site Partial alteration to, or loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition, and / or the addition of elements, features and / activities which are not uncharacteristic in the area, would result in partial alteration to, or loss of, aesthetic and / or perceptual qualities
Low	Minor alteration to key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition The size, scale and / or geographical extent of change is considered small due to the extent and proportion of loss of, or change to, existing landscape components Effects likely to be experienced at a small scale, influencing the landscape within which the change is proposed at the site level (within the site itself) and localized within the immediate setting

	Minor alteration to, or loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition, and / or the addition of elements, features and / activities which are characteristic in the area, would result in minor alteration to aesthetic and / or perceptual qualities
Negligible	Barely discernible alterations to key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition The size, scale and / or geographical extent of change is considered very small due to the extent and proportion of loss of, or change to, existing landscape components Effects likely to be experienced at a very small scale, experience on parts of the site with no influence beyond the site on the landscape within which the change is proposed Barely discernible alterations to key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition, and / or the addition of elements, features and / activities which are entirely characteristic in the area, would result in barely discernible alteration to aesthetic and / or perceptual qualities
Neutral	No change to the baseline condition

Table 12: Scale of effects

		Magnitude of Change			
Sensitivity		**High**	**Medium**	**Low**	**Negligible**
	High	Major	Major	Moderate	Minor
	Medium	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Negligible

Nature of Effects

34. It is a requirement of the EIA Regulations to state whether effects are adverse, beneficial or neutral. The landscape effects will be considered against the landscape baseline, which includes published landscape strategies or policies if they exist.

35. Visual effects are more subjective in terms of their valency as people's perception of the proposals varies through the spectrum of negative, neutral and positive attitudes. In the assessment of visual effects, the assessor will exercise objective professional judgement in

assessing the significance of effects and will assume, unless otherwise stated, that all effects are adverse, thus representing the worst-case scenario.

Table 13: Nature of landscape/character effects

Major adverse	Be at considerable variance with the character of the receiving landscape. Degrade or diminish the integrity of a range of characteristic elements or features. Damage the sense of place. Such effects would be incapable of full mitigation and would degrade the integrity of the landscape.
Moderate Adverse	Show some variance or inconsistency with the character of the receiving landscape. Have an adverse impact on characteristic elements or features. Detract from the sense of place. Proposals are likely to be out of scale with the existing topography, grain, scale and patter of the landscape.
Minor Adverse	Not quite fit in with the character of the receiving landscape. Be at variance with characteristic elements or features. Have a limited influence on the sense of place. Proposals may not logically complement the existing topography, grain, scale and patter of the landscape and constitute an unsympathetic outcome.
Neutral/Negligible	Maintain the character of the receiving landscape. Blend in with the characteristic elements or features. Very minor levels of planting of native species as part of the proposals. Enable the sense of place to be retained.
Minor Beneficial	Complement the character of the receiving landscape. Maintain or enhance characteristic elements or features. Minor levels of planting of native species as part of the proposals. Enable some sense of place to be restored.
Moderate Beneficial	Improve the character of the receiving landscape. Enable the restoration of characteristic elements and features partially lost or diminished as a result of changes from the absence of or inappropriate management or development.

	Moderate levels of planting of native species as part of the proposals. Enable the sense of place to be restored.
Major Beneficial	Enhance the character of the receiving landscape. Enable the restoration of characteristic elements and features lost as a result of changes from absence of or inappropriate management or development. Major levels of planting of native species as part of the proposals. Enable the sense of place to be enhanced.

Visual Assessment Methodology

36. The visual assessment considers the potential effect of the proposals on visual amenity; as experienced by people within the study area. They relate to changes that arise in the composition of available views as a result of changes to the landscape, to people's responses to the changes, and to the overall effects with respect to visual amenity.

37. The effects on visual amenity will be assessed through the consideration of potential effects on receptors. Visual receptors include people in their homes, at work, undertaking recreational activities or when travelling through and area i.e. using roads, footpaths etc, where they would be likely to experience a change in the existing view as a result of the construction and operation of the proposals.

38. The visual effects may include a change to an existing view, sequential views, or wider visual amenity as a result of development or the loss of particular elements or features already present in the view. Cumulative visual effects may result when receptors gain views of similar types of development, which combine to have a cumulative visual effect.

39. It is generally accepted that the two criteria that combine to determine the scale of visual effect are the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of impact.

40. The assessment of the visual baseline within the study area will take into consideration the following:

    - The area within which the proposals may be visible;
    - The different groups of people within the study area who may experience views of the proposals;
    - The identification of specific viewpoints; and

- The nature of views at the viewpoints.

Viewpoints

41. The selection of viewpoints will be based on the following criteria:

    - The requirement to provide an even spread of representative viewpoints within the visual envelope, and around all sides of the Proposed Development;
    - From locations which represent a range of near, middle- and long-distance views;
    - Whilst private views are relevant, public viewpoints i.e. from roads and public rights of way and other area of open public access, will be selected since they are the most significant in term of the number of receptors affected;
    - Views from sensitive receptors within designated landscapes

42. In accordance with the GLVIA3, the viewpoints that will be selected take account of:

    - The potential number and sensitivity of viewers who may be affected;
    - The viewing direction, distance (i.e. short, medium and long-distance views) and elevation;
    - The nature of the viewing experience (for example static views, views from settlements and views from sequential points along routes);
    - The view type (for example panoramas, vistas, glimpses); and
    - The potential for cumulative views of the proposed development in conjunction with other developments.

43. The findings and conclusion of this assessment assume that all existing vegetation located outside the site would be retained unless otherwise identified for removal.

44. The assessment of visual effects was undertaken on the basis of viewpoint analysis as recommended in best practice guidelines. The viewpoints which are in different directions from the site and are at varying distances and locations were selected to represent a range of views and visual receptor types.

45. The viewpoints are representational and not exhaustive. They are taken from publicly accessible land and not from any third party, private, land.

46. The viewpoints were used as the basis for determining the effects of visual receptors within the entire study area. The viewpoints were photographed at 1.6 metres above ground level.

47. The photos were taken using a Canon EOS 5d Mark IV full frame camera using a fixed 50mm lens.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

48. Sensitivity is determined by a combination of the value that is attached to a view and the susceptibility of the receptor to changes in that view that would arise as a result of the Proposed Development as outlined in pages 113-114 of GLVIA3. Both value and susceptibility are assessed as high, medium or low.

49. GLVIA3 says a judgement should be made as to the value of a particular view being experienced. In making a professional judgement as to the value attached to a view, the following criteria have helped guide the process. Not all the criteria have to apply to a particular view and the criteria are not in a hierarchy.

Table 14: Criteria for judging levels of visual value

Low	Views from within, or towards, undesignated landscapes and / or features of site-wide importance View is of low scenic beauty View makes a very limited contribution to understanding of landscape function / contribution Views from landscapes / viewpoints which are not particularly popular or recognised as being destinations in their own right, including infrequently used rights of way Views with no social / cultural / historic associations
Medium	Views from within, or towards, undesignated landscapes and / or features of local importance View is of moderate scenic beauty View makes a moderate contribution to understanding of landscape function / contribution Views from locally-popular recreation areas / green open spaces / public rights of way, but not used by many visitors Views with social / cultural / historic associations of local importance

High	Views from within, or towards, designated landscapes and / or features of regional or countywide importance e.g. Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV), Country Parks, Conservation Areas, Grade II listed buildings, National Trust land etc., especially where contributing to the significance of an asset / feature View is of high scenic beauty View makes an important contribution to understanding of landscape function / contribution Views from well-used and popular visitor attractions / tourist destinations, including long-distance / themed trails, Heritage Coasts, Public Open Spaces / Local Green Spaces, used by relatively large numbers of people Views with social / cultural / historic associations of countywide importance

Table 15: Visual Receptors Susceptibility to Change

Low	Receptors in commercial and industrial premises, schools, playing fields etc. where the view is not central to the use People using main roads, rail corridors, infrequently used / inaccessible public rights of way and likely to be travelling for a purpose other than to enjoy the view People moving past the view often at high speed (e.g. on motorways and main line railways) and with little or no focus on or interest in the landscape through which they are travelling Motorists and passengers on main roads People working in premises where the views are not likely to make an important contribution to the setting, and / or to the quality of working life People engaged in outdoor sport and recreation which does not involve or depend on appreciation of views of the landscape Communities where views do not contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area
Medium	Receptors within, or looking towards, undesignated landscapes, areas and features of local importance, and in places where the landscape / feature is not necessarily part of the reason for the visit People engaged in outdoor recreation whose attention is unlikely to be focused on the landscape and / or particular views, and / or for whom the view is not necessarily a factor in the enjoyment of the activity Users of public rights of way where attention is not focused on the landscape/and/or views (for example in densely vegetated or built up areas) People staying in hotels and healthcare institutions who are likely to appreciate and / or benefit from views of their surroundings

	People working in premises where the views are likely to make an important contribution to the setting, and / or to the quality of working life Motorists and passengers on rural lanes Residential properties (upper stories/less use in daylight hours) Communities where views partly contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area
High	Receptors (tourists / visitors) within, or looking towards, internationally- or nationally-designated landscapes, areas and features such as World Heritage Sites, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Registered Historic Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Grade I and II* listed buildings and other places where the landscape / feature is the main reason for the visit People using national trails and other designated routes where the view is likely to be the focus of attention Residents at home, although thus will depend on the rooms occupied during waking hours People, whether residents or visitors, engaged in outdoor recreation, including users of public rights of way, e.g. walkers, riders, cyclists, boat users, motorists, whose attention may be focused on the landscape and / or particular views, and / or for whom the view is a factor in the enjoyment of the activity People travelling through the landscape on roads, rail or other routes on recognised scenic routes or where there is a distinct awareness of views of their surroundings and their visual amenity Residential properties (lower stories and gardens) Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area

Table 16: Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

	VALUE			
SUSCEPTIBILITY		**HIGH**	**MEDIUM**	**LOW**
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Low	Low

Magnitude of Change on Visual Impact

50. The Magnitude of Visual Impact experienced by visual receptors as a result of the development proposals will be described by reference to the:

- Scale of change in the view in respect of the loss or addition of features and changes in the visual composition, including the proportion of view occupied by the proposed development;
- Geographical extent – This is likely to reflect the orientation/ angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor; The distance of the viewpoint from the main development and the extent of the area over which the changes would be visible;
- Duration of the effect - (short 0-5yrs/ medium 5-10yrs/ long term 20yrs, temporary, permanent, intermittent/ continuous and whether the views will be full, partial or glimpses.)
- Reversibility - the ability of the proposed development to be reversed.

51. The criteria which will be used to guide the assessment of the magnitude of impact that would be experience by visual receptors as a result of the proposals are outlined below;

Table 17: Criteria for magnitude of change for visual receptors

High	The proposals will be clearly noticeable and the view would be fundamentally changed by its presence. Direct or oblique views with changes over a notable horizontal and/or vertical extent.
Medium	The proposals will form a new element within the view which is likely to be recognised by the receptor. Direct or oblique views with a moderate horizontal and/or vertical extent of the view affected.
Low	The proposals will form a new and recognisable element within the view which is likely to be recognised by the receptor. The proposals will form a minor constituent of the view being partially visible or at sufficient distance to be a small component.
Negligible	The proposals will form a barely noticeable component of the view, and the view whilst slightly changed would be similar to the baseline situation.
No Change	No change to the existing view.

Scale of Effects

52. The scale of the landscape and visual effects is determined by;

    - cross referencing the sensitivity of the landscape feature, landscape character or view with;

    - the magnitude of change. The scale of effects is described as major, moderate, minor, negligible, neutral or no change.

Table 18: Scale of effects

		Magnitude of Change			
Sensitivity		**High**	**Medium**	**Low**	**Negligible**
	High	Major	Major	Moderate	Minor
	Medium	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Negligible

Nature of Effects

53. It is a requirement of the EIA Regulations to state whether effects are adverse, beneficial or neutral.

54. Visual effects are more subjective in terms of their valency as people's perception of the proposals varies through the spectrum of negative, neutral and positive attitudes. In the assessment of visual effects, the assessor will exercise objective professional judgement in assessing the significance of effects and will assume, unless otherwise stated, that all effects are adverse, thus representing the worst-case scenario.

Table 19: Nature of visual effects

Major adverse	The proposals would give rise to negative changes that would cause major deterioration to the view and constitute a major discordant element in the view.
Moderate Adverse	The proposals would give rise to negative changes that would cause obvious deterioration to the view.
Minor Adverse	The proposals would give rise to negative changes that would cause limited deterioration to the view.
Negligible Adverse	The proposals would give rise to negative changes that be barely perceptible in the view.
Neutral	The change to the view would be barely perceptible to the point it is not apparent if the changes are positive or negative.
No Change	No change to the view. Proposals are not visible.
Negligible Beneficial	The proposals would give rise to a barely perceptible improvement in the view.
Minor Beneficial	The proposals would give rise to a limited improvement to the view.
Moderate Beneficial	The proposals would give rise to an obvious improvement to the view.
Major Beneficial	The proposals would lead to a major improvement in the view.

Mitigation

55. The purpose of the mitigation is to prevent/ avoid, reduce and where possible remedy or offset any negative (adverse) effect on the environment arising from the proposals. Mitigation is not solely concerned with 'damage limitation' but may also consider measures that could compensate for unavoidable residual effects.

56. Mitigation measures are generally considered to fall into three categories:

- Primary measures, developed through the iterative design process, which have become integrated or embedded in to the project design;

- Standard construction and operational management practices for avoiding and reducing environmental effects;

- Secondary measures designed to address any residual adverse remaining after primary measures and standard construction practices have been incorporated into the scheme.

57. Strategies to address likely negative (adverse) effects include:

- Avoid impact by changing the proposal;

- Reduce the impact by changing the proposals;

- Remediation of the impact by screen planting for example;

- Compensation for the impact, for example replacement of removed trees with new tree planting; and

- Enhancement, for example creation of a new landscape or habitat.

<u>Guidelines for mitigation</u>

- Landscape mitigation measures should be designed to suit the existing landscape character and needs of the locality, respecting and building on local landscape distinctiveness and helping to address any relevant existing issues in the landscape.

- It must be recognised than many mitigation measures, especially planting, are not immediately effective. Where planting is intended to provide a visual screen for the development, it may also be appropriate to assess the effects for different seasons and periods of time, such as day of opening and Year 15 and potentially other periods in line with phasing. In such projections the assumptions made about growth rates should be clearly stated on the proposed landscape plans;

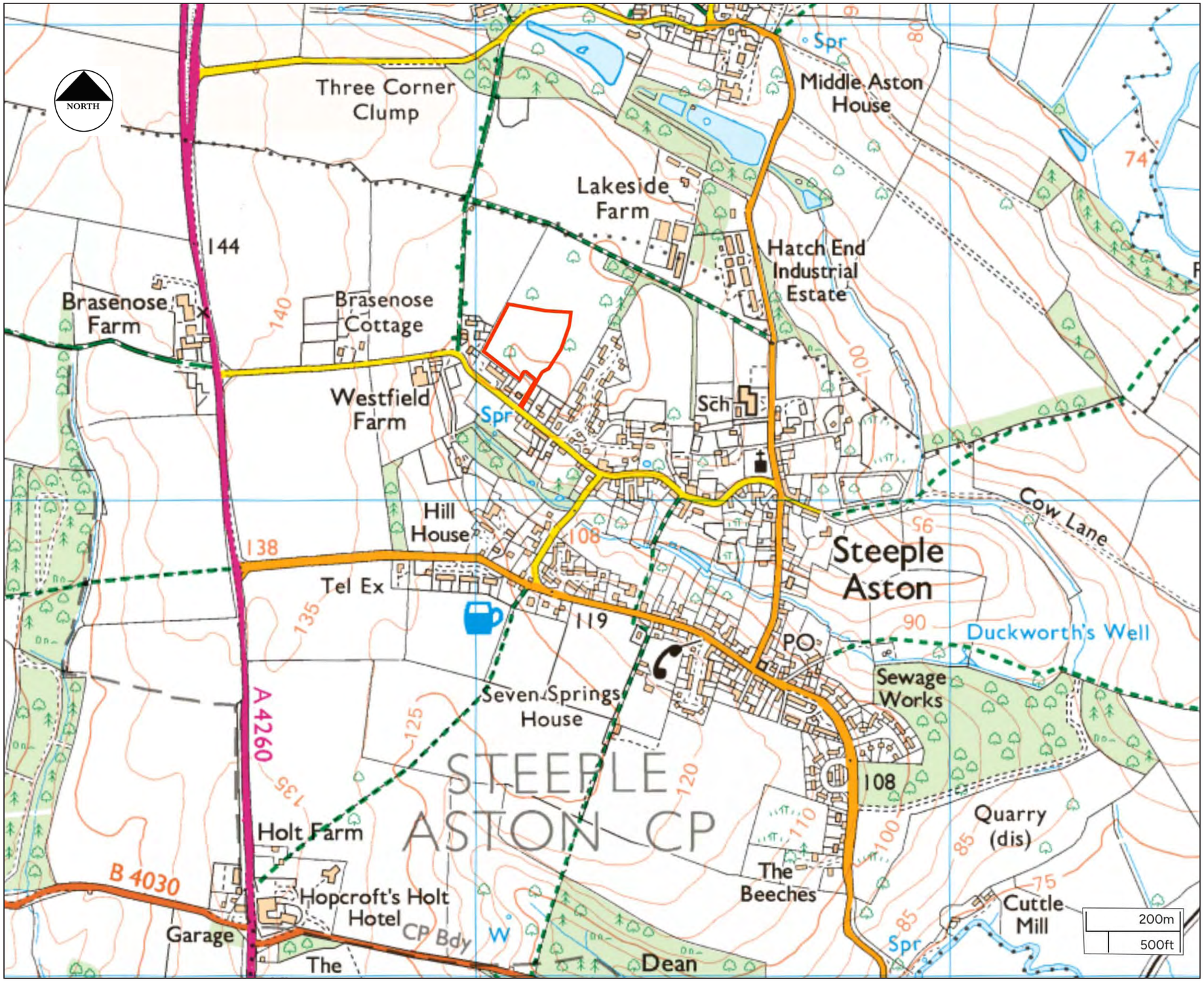
- Use of appropriate form, material and design of buildings. It is not always practical or desirable to screen buildings and associated development. In these cases, the scale, design, colour and texture of buildings/ structures should be carefully considered to aid integration with the surroundings;

- Alterations to landforms (including creation of bunds or mounds) together with structure planting and/ or off-site planting;

- Minimising light pollution and avoiding or reducing obtrusive light; and

- Planting: Structural planting can help to integrate and ‘soften’ development as well as being of potential value as a wildlife habitat. Offsite planting should also be considered where it could be of benefit to screen the proposed development from sensitive landscape and visual receptors.

APPENDIX 2: LOCATION MAP



Map: OS under licence

Key to Plan:

The Site

Note: The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon.

Revision	Description	Date
-	-	-

LANDARB SOLUTIONS

Project:
Land north of Old Quarry House

Description:
Location Map

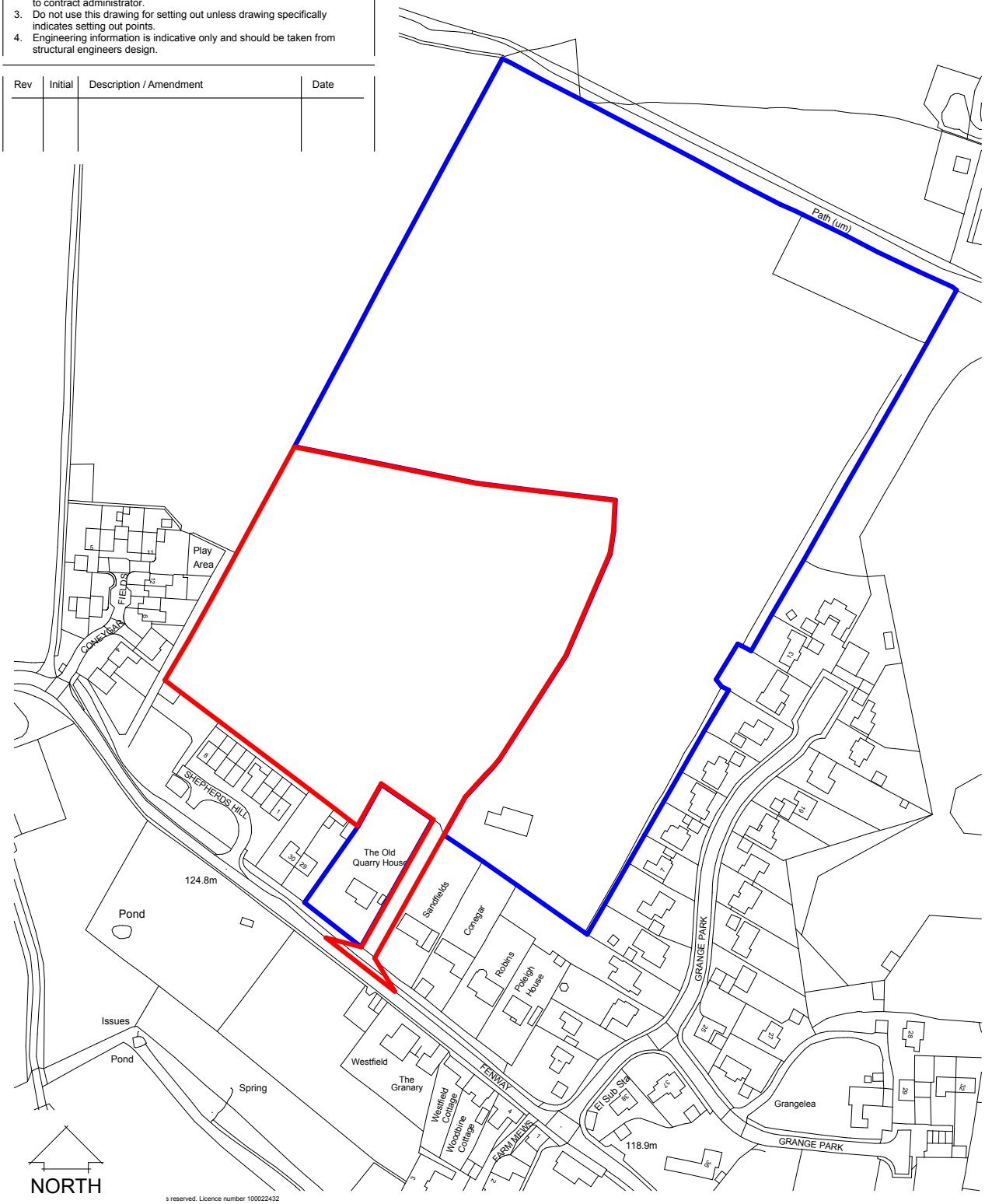
Status:
For Planning

Scale:	Drawn I Checked		Date:
As shown	**SW**	**DP**	**27/04/26**
Job Number:	Drawing Number:		Revision:
LAS 995	**02**		**-**

APPENDIX 3: SITE LOCATION PLAN

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4. Engineering information is indicative only and should be taken from structural engineers design.

Rev	Initial	Description / Amendment	Date



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RIBA
Chartered Practice

Drawing title: Site Location Plan

Client: [redacted]

Drawn by: JPE

Project: Residential Development
Old Quarry House, Steeple Aston,
Oxfordshire, OX25 4SS

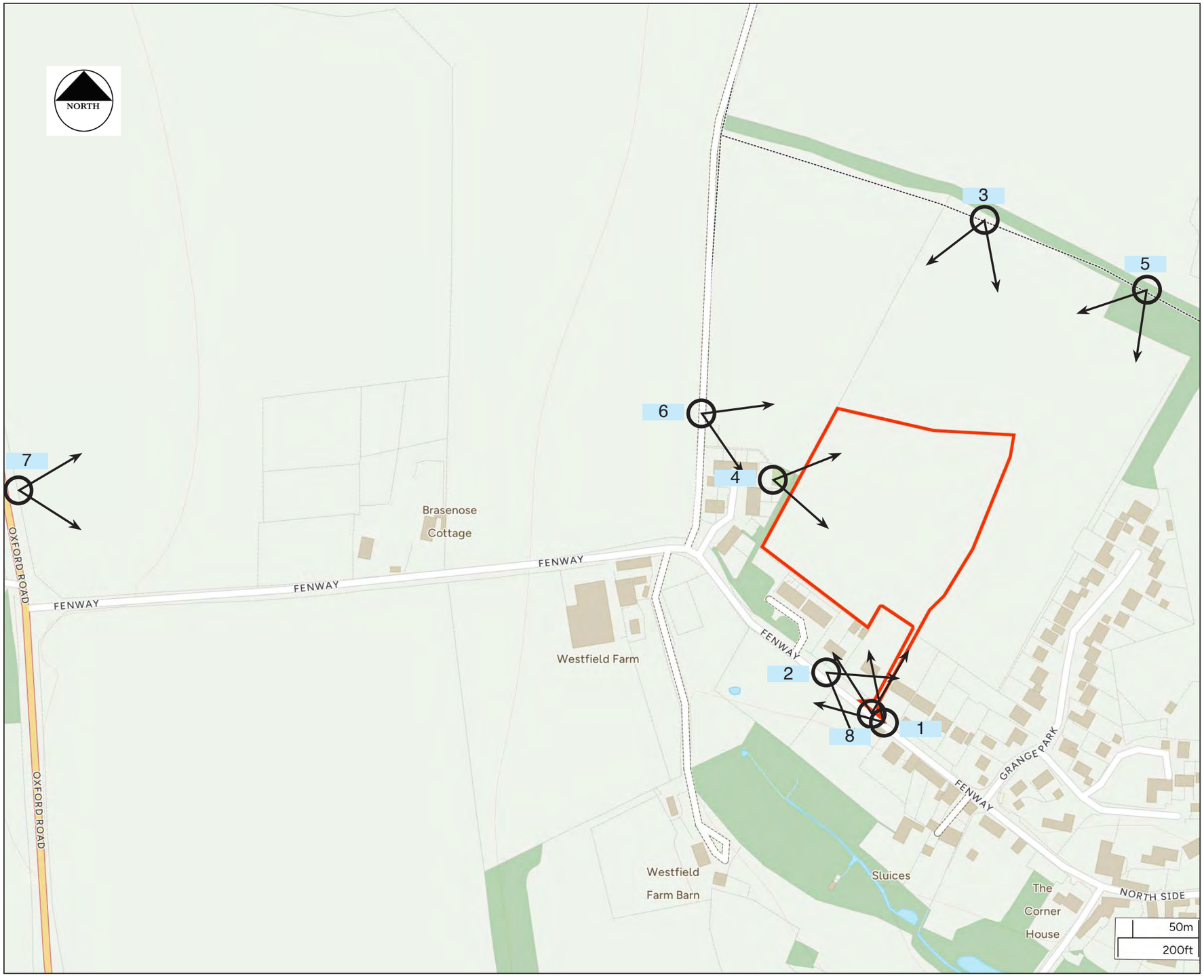
Scale: 1:2500 @ A4

Date: 18/03/2026

Drawing No: 25.20.019.PL001

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APPENDIX 4: PHOTOVIEW LOCATION PLAN



Map: OS under licence

Key to Plan:

The Site

10

Representative Viewpoint Locations

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Revision	Description	Date
-	-	-

LANDARB SOLUTIONS

Project:
Land north of Old Quarry House

Description:
Photoview Location Plan

Status:
For Planning

Scale:	Drawn I Checked	Date:
As shown	**SW DP**	**27/04/26**
Job Number:	Drawing Number:	Revision:
LAS 995	**03**	**-**

APPENDIX 5: LCA2 CHERWELL VALLEY

LCA 2: Cherwell Valley

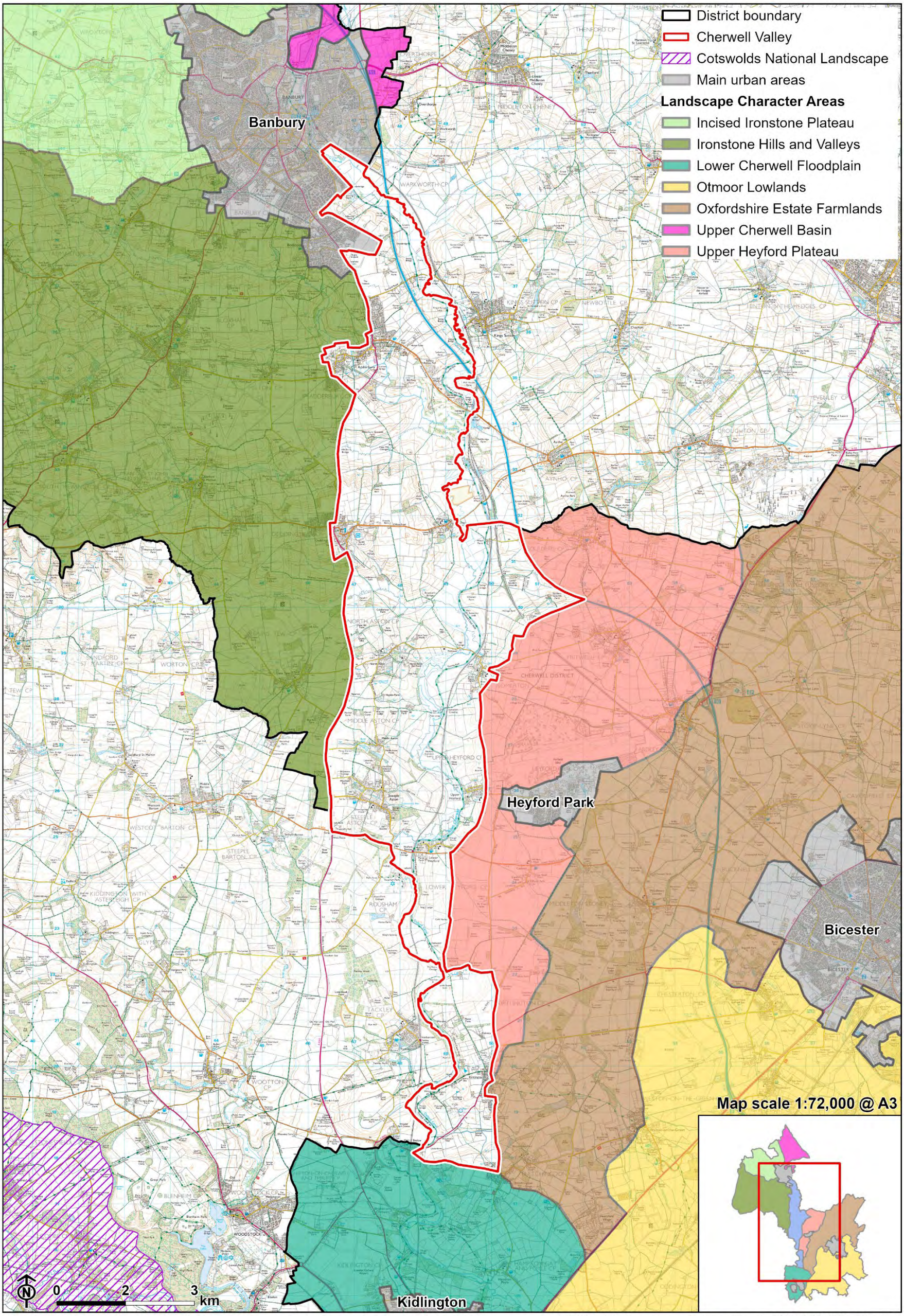
Location and key characteristics

The Cherwell Valley (see Map 1) forms a narrow strip of land in the centre of the district, adjoining South Northamptonshire to the east and West Oxfordshire to the south and west. The northern half of the valley, where the River Cherwell forms the county boundary, comprises the western side of the valley together with some flatter ridge-top land. From Ockley Brook south to Lower Heyford the Character Area includes both sides of the valley, and south of Lower Heyford only the west side of the valley lies within Cherwell District.

- The River Cherwell flows southwards through a well-defined narrow valley, joined by its main tributaries the Sor Brook and River Swere. Flat, low-lying topography with seasonally flooded alluvial floodplains is enclosed by rolling valley sides.
- Medium fields in intensive arable use on the valley sides contrast with smaller open fields used for pasture and water meadows on the floodplain.
- Transport infrastructure, including the Cherwell Valley railway line and the Oxford Canal, follows the north-south valley landform. The canal, with its associated bridges and locks, is an important feature often running parallel to the river.
- Small, often nucleated villages sit on the higher ground of the valley sides. They are largely traditional in character, with limestone common in the south and ironstone in the north. They contain a number of listed buildings, and often have designated Conservation Areas.
- The Oxford Canal Walk along the canal is the main form of access to the valley floor, which is often inaccessible. There are limited river crossings.

- There are high levels of tranquillity and relative remoteness, particularly in the south away from Banbury and Bodicote.
- Limited tree cover results in long, open views across the valley from the higher ground of the valley sides, as well as views towards higher ground from the valley floor. There are very few incongruous features, resulting in a strong rural character.

1: Location Map



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12590_LCA_Overview_w_inset_series_r6_A3P 18/09/2024 EB:bell_j

Oxford Canal and River Cherwell in seasonal flood



Long views across the valley from Upper Heyford



Traditional villages with strong local vernacular



Prominent residential and commercial development on the edge of Banbury



Description

Natural (landform, water, semi-natural land cover)

- The River Cherwell cuts through the Marlstone Rock Bed, and iron-bearing limestone, to the Lias siltstones, mudstones and clays beneath. South of Northbrook, the river instead cuts through Oolitic Clypeus Grit, a fossil bearing limestone, and a substantial layer of micritic White Limestone. Kirtlington Quarry, on the limestone, is a Local Nature Reserve and geological SSSI.
- The Cherwell valley was over-deepened by glacial meltwater and the size of the valley is inconsistent with the river's present flow. The broad, steeply incised valley, typically rising 40-80m above the valley floor, narrows as the river flows through the limestones. The valley in the north is less sharply defined, as the river is joined from the west by two major tributaries, the Sor Brook and the River Swere. In some places the valley sides slope gently down, with the river curving between interlocking spurs, while elsewhere the valley floor opens out and the river winds across a narrow floodplain. The valley floor is subject to seasonal flooding.
- A rich flora survives in many of the wet pastures on the valley floor. Willow trees mark the course of the river, with white willow most common along the Cherwell and Swere. Some willows are old pollards, while trees and scrub growing on land between the river and the canal provide valuable wildlife habitats.
- Semi-natural habitats include extensive floodplain grazing marsh along the river corridor, good quality semi-improved grassland, occasional deciduous woodlands on the higher ground and small areas of traditional orchards in villages and near farmsteads. Floodplain meadows at Bestmoor are nationally designated as a SSSI for the rich alluvial meadows.

See Map 2 (Landform and Water) and Map 3 (Semi-natural Land Cover).

Cultural/social (land use, settlement, infrastructure, historic character)

- Fertile clay over the valley sides, which includes areas of Grade 1 and 2 agricultural land near Upper Heyford, supports intensive cereal farming in medium-scale fields. On the steeper slopes and around settlements a pattern of smaller fields and less intensive mixed farming has survived. The smaller fields are usually contained by hedgerows, many of which have grown out into lines of trees which fade out one behind the other into the distance, emphasising the slope and dip of the valley sides.
- The wet soils of the broad floodplain support permanent pasture, grazed by cattle. Fields on the floodplain are often bounded by ditches, which are not obvious unless lined by willows.
- The Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) identifies a mixed historic field pattern. The majority of the area has been formed by 18th and 19th century enclosure, including piecemeal enclosure, planned enclosure and reorganised enclosure. There are also areas of prairie/ amalgamated enclosure where 19th and 20th century farming techniques have removed field boundaries.
- Villages are mainly situated on the valley slopes facing one another, with churches providing focal points. Most of the villages have agricultural origins. Narrow village streets and lanes, and some tree cover creates a sense of enclosure. This is particularly evident at Steeple, Middle and North Aston. Occasional gaps in the built-up frontage provide views into the surrounding countryside (such as The Green at North Aston).
- The villages each have their own manor house and medieval church and contain many fine stone listed houses. The majority of the villages are covered by Conservation Areas. Local vernacular reflects the underlying geology, with ironstone in the north and limestone in the south.
- Outside of the villages, earthworks show evidence of previous occupation, including east and west of Somerton and the substantial earthworks of an 11th century motte and bailey castle at Deddington. These are all Scheduled Monuments. A small part of the Grade I Registered Park and

Garden at Rousham Park lies within this Character Area, although the majority lies within West Oxfordshire District.

- Running close to the river, the Oxford Canal and its crossing points are prominent features on the valley floor. Distinctive hump-backed bridges, the iconic balance beam lift bridges, locks and mill buildings associated with the canal are listed buildings.
- Transportation routes are common through the valley. The Cherwell Valley railway runs along the length of the valley, while the A4260 runs along the western valley ridge. A small section of the Chiltern mainline railway and the M40 cross the north-east of the valley.
- Public Rights of Way cross the valley, connecting the settlements. River crossings are limited, and the canal and its towpath (the promoted Oxford Canal Walk) are the only means of access to much of the valley floor.

See Map 4 (Cultural Heritage Designations).

Perceptual (views, tranquillity, associations)

- The low-lying pasture landscape is traditional and unspoilt, with very few incongruous features in views. The exception to this is in the north, where the modern edges of Banbury and Bodicote, including large warehouses, are visible.
- Long views across the valley floor from the valley sides, with lines of trees resulting from outgrown hedges and small clumps of trees in field corners providing a localised well-treed character. These combined elements result in pockets of pleasingly patterned landscape.
- Mechanised farming has resulted in the prevailing rolling arable landscape with a weak, open and unstructured field pattern, but this does allow long views across the valley. Occasional solitary oak trees stand vulnerably within open ploughland.
- Heyford Park, a new development on a former airbase at Upper Heyford (within LCA 6: Upper Heyford Plateau), is visible from the western valley side.

- The Cherwell Valley forms the landscape backdrop to Rousham Park (predominately within West Oxfordshire District), with important views from the park across the river towards Upper Heyford.
- The north of the LCA provides a rural setting to Banbury, including new residential development at Bodicote, with long views across the valley and into West Northamptonshire.

See Map 5 (CPRE Tranquillity Map).

County landscape typology

- In the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (see Map 6) the river and its immediate floodplain are classified as River Meadowlands, with the lower valley defined as Vale Farmland or Clay Vale rising to Farmland Slopes and Valley Sides, Upstanding Village Farmlands and, further south, Wooded Estatelands.

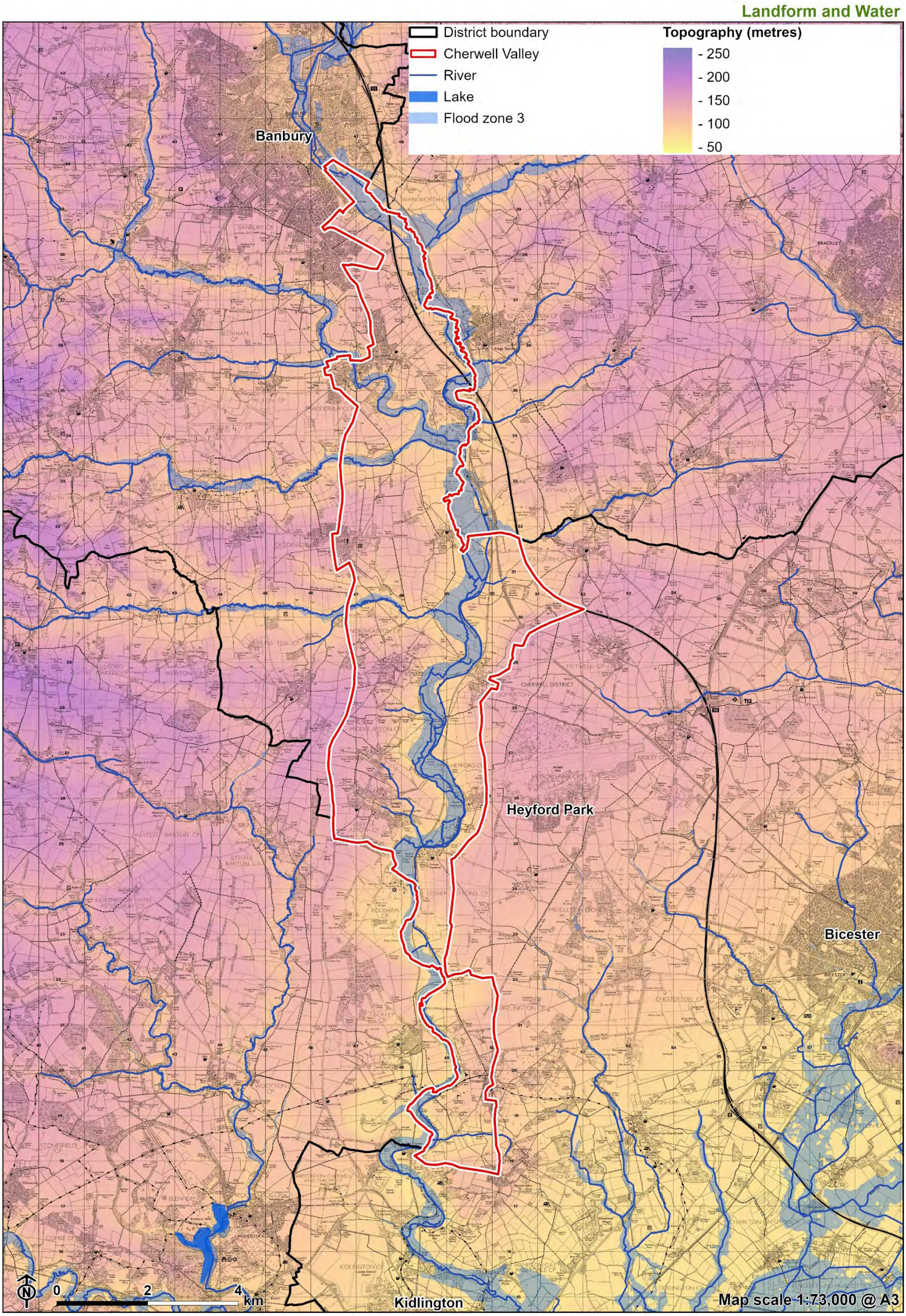
Valued qualities

- The landform affords long views from higher slopes into and across the valley, and views from the valley floor to higher ground.
- Traditional patterns of land management and the valley floor's relative inaccessibility contribute to the richness and variety of wildlife habitats within the Cherwell Valley, which in turn enhance landscape character. Of particular note are the floodplain meadows at Bestmoor SSSI, near Somerton, which have a long history of traditional grassland management, with grazing following a summer hay cut. The nutrient-rich, alluvial meadows support a number of plants associated with unimproved meadows, and Somerton Meadows are also a well-known feeding ground for wintering waterfowl.
- A small section of Rousham Park lies within Cherwell District. William Kent remodelled the landscape gardens between 1733 and 1740, and they represent his only surviving intact landscape. The Cherwell Valley forms

the landscape backdrop to Rousham with important views from the park across the river towards Upper Heyford. A large area of countryside in Cherwell is designated as part of the Rousham Conservation Area to reflect this.

- Small, attractive villages on the valley-side brows contain many historic, listed buildings, and are valued for their time-depth and localised vernacular of ironstone in the north and limestone in the south. Conservation Areas are designated at Adderbury, Deddington, North and Steeple Aston, Somerton and Upper and Lower Heyford.
- Impressive, listed structures include the fifteenth century bridge over the River Cherwell at Lower Heyford, and a fourteenth century tithe barn at Upper Heyford. Huge mounds which mark the bank and ditch enclosure of Deddington Castle site and earthworks indicating the site of a deserted medieval village at Somerton are both Scheduled Monuments
- The Oxford Canal is a historic transport route, with unique diamond shaped weir locks near Shipton on Cherwell and Aynho, humpbacked bridges and iconic balance beam lift bridges creating a strong sense of place.
- Kirtlington Quarry is designated as a geological SSSI, as it has the richest assemblage of Middle Jurassic mammal fossils in the world.

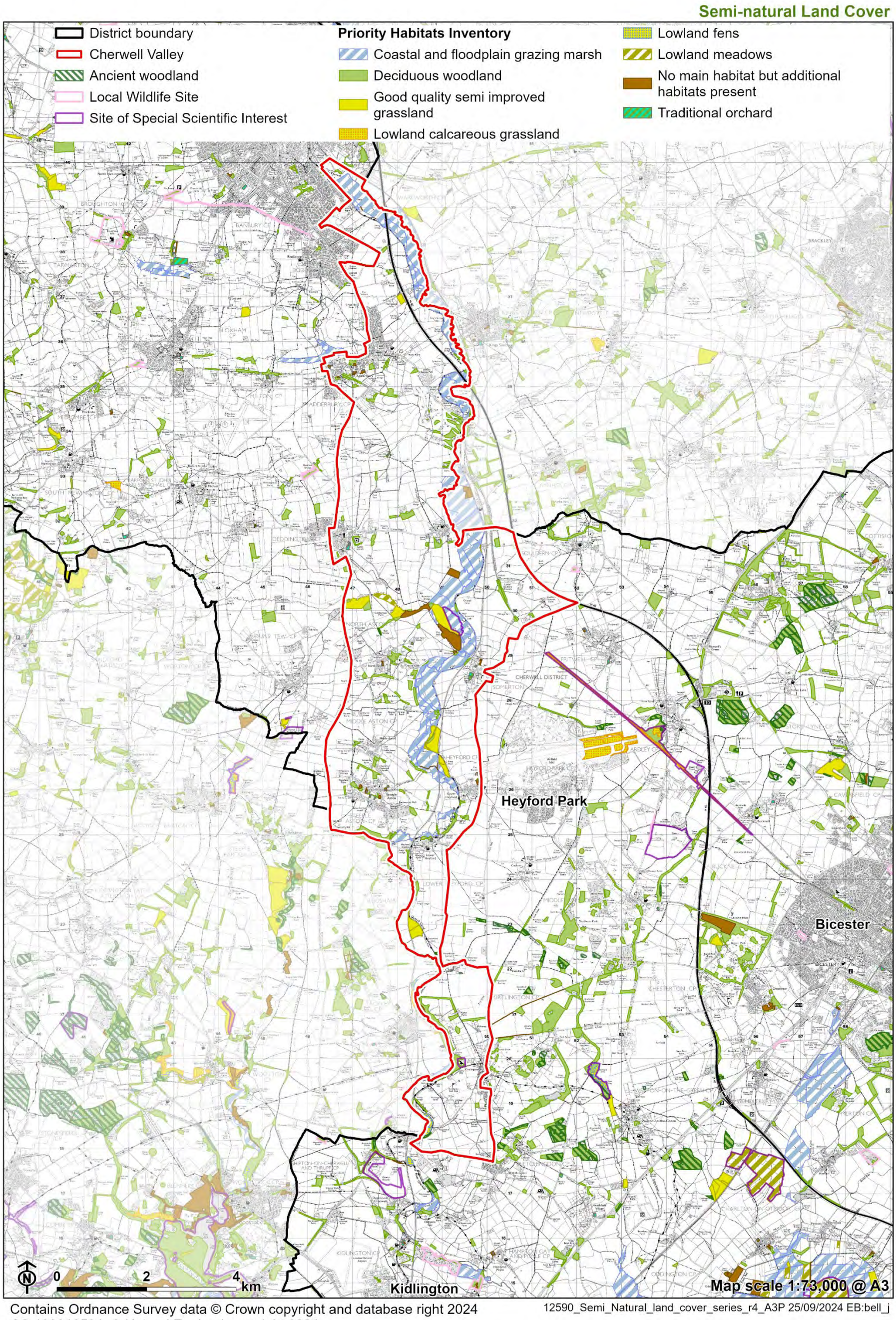
2: Landform and Water



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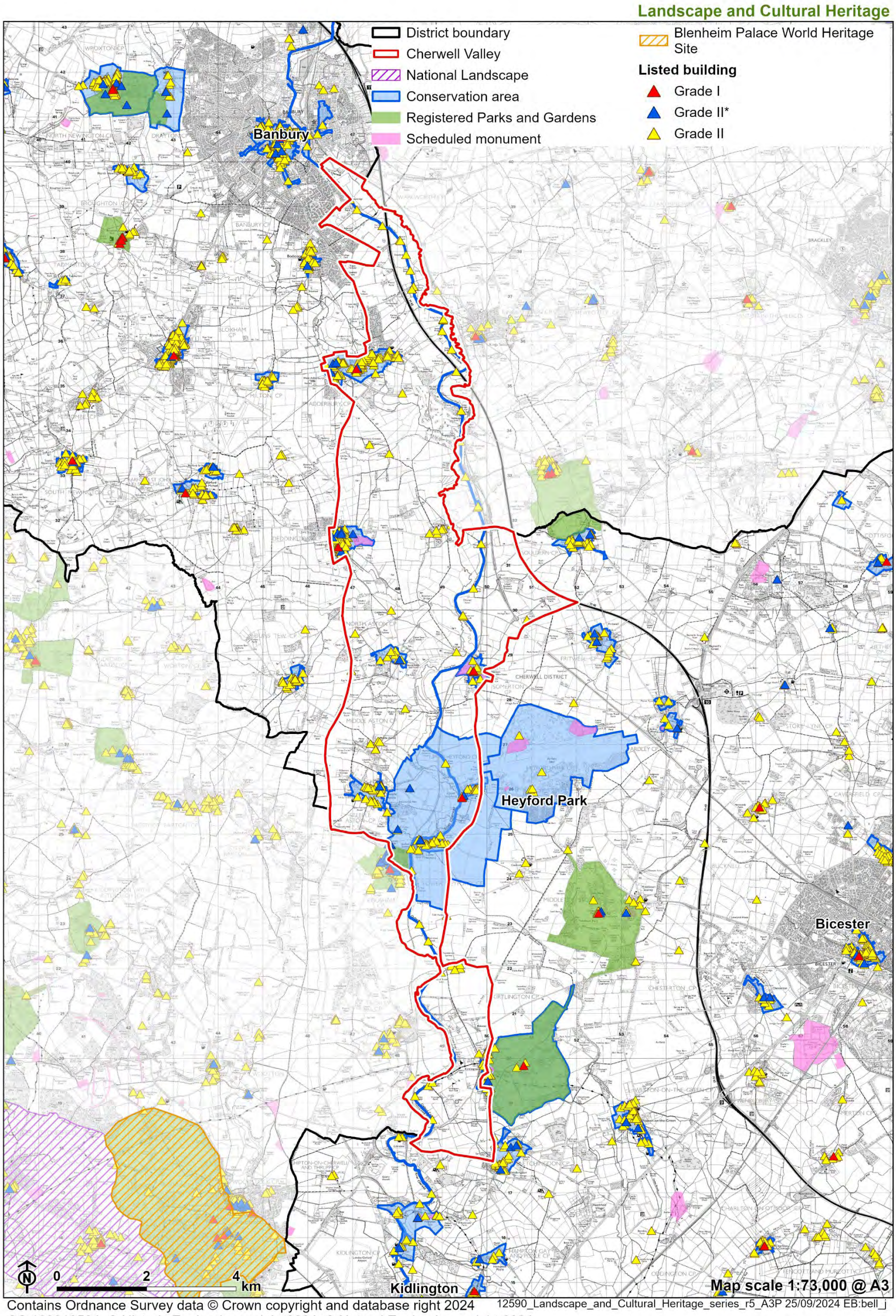
3: Semi-natural Land Cover



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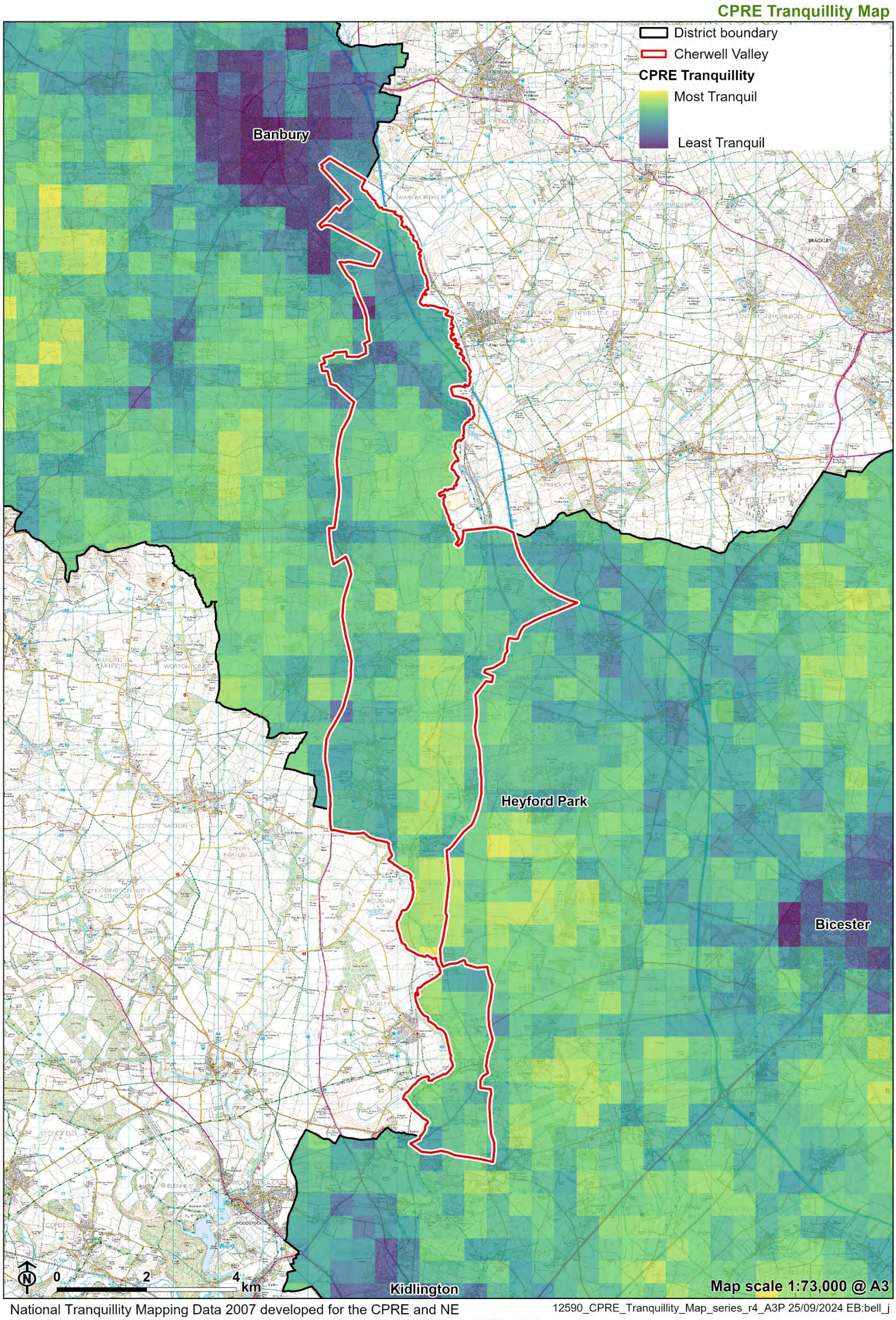
4: Cultural Heritage Designations



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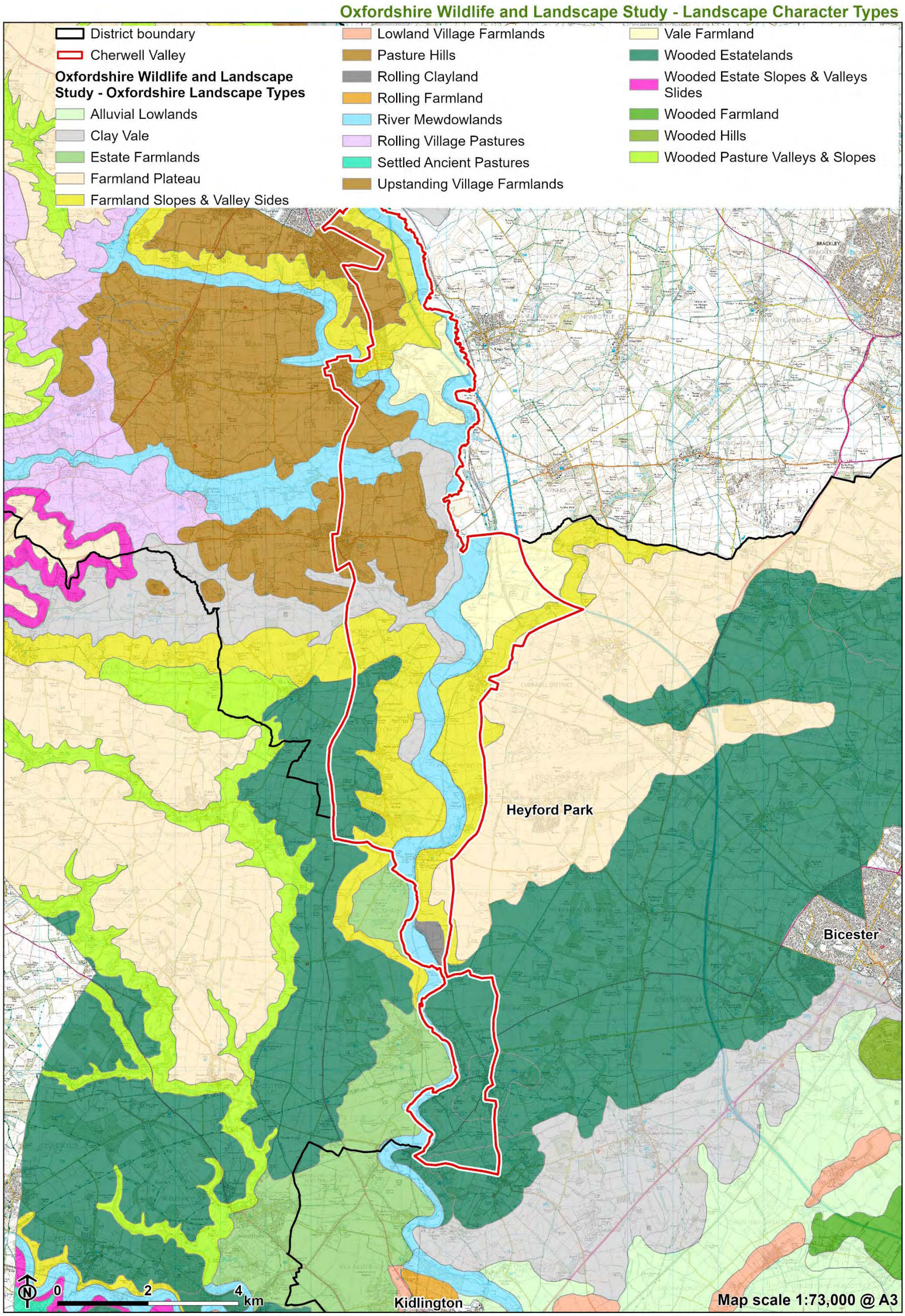
5: CPRE Tranquillity Map



National Tranquillity Mapping Data 2007 developed for the CPRE and NE by Northumbria University. © Crown copyright and database right 2024 OS 100018504.

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6: Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study - Landscape Character Types



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12590_OWLS_series_r1_A3P 25/09/2024 EB:bell_j

Forces for change

- In the north, expansion of the industrial edge of Banbury, and the residential edges of Banbury and Bodicote is altering the rural character of the landscape. This is particularly the case south-east of Bodicote, where the open landscape between the settlement edges and the M40 is diminishing, although planned tree planting on the edge of these new developments will help to screen them from the wider valley landscape.
- The Cherwell and its tributaries are in a mix of moderate and poor ecological condition. This is caused by a range of issues, including poor livestock management, physical modification of the river channel and banks, and sewage discharge. The Cherwell and Ray Catchment Partnership seeks to tackle issues involving water quality, quantity and habitat. These issues and interventions may alter the character of the Cherwell valley.
- The landscape is susceptible to the impacts of climate change, including higher average temperatures and drier summers, wetter winters, more frequent winter storms and flooding leading to:
  - Changes to seasonal flooding and flash floods, and potential for increasing demand for flood defence activity. This could create more physical habitat degradation and introduce potentially detracting features.
  - Loss of woodland /trees due to wind-throw and of dieback in drought prone locations.
  - Spread of non-native and invasive species such as giant hogweed.
  - Changes in cropping and land use as a response to climate change impacting the character of the farmland.
  - Drought conditions leading to crop failures, and reduced productivity changing the character of the farmed landscape.

Landscape strategy and guidelines

Retain the role of the River Cherwell and the Oxford Canal as distinctive landscape features contributing to a sense of place.

- Maintain the open character of farmland, contributing to long views across the valley.
- Maintain tree cover that contributes to linear character of river and canal and avoid planting that would detract from this linear character. The valley floor of the Cherwell is open and characterised by hedgerows and therefore not a suitable location for large areas of woodland. However, small stands or copses on the valley slopes or brow may be appropriate.
- Consider opportunities for meandering and naturalised sections of the River Cherwell to slow water flows and reduce flood impacts, in accordance with the Cherwell and Ray Catchment Partnership and Thames River Basin Management Plan.
- Maintain the canal and associated historic bridges and locks.
- Ensure that new development does not detract from the sense of place associated with the river and canal. Retain views across the river and canal from the settlement edges, particularly at Bondicote in the north.
- Further vehicular crossings of the River Cherwell and its valley should be restricted.
- Enhance recreational access, including developing east-west connections across the river valley.

Preserve the tranquillity and strong rural character of locations remote from transport infrastructure and urban edges.

- Avoid development that would intrude on locations currently remote from urbanising influences, either through its size, scale or character, or its impact on levels of activity (such as traffic generation).
- Avoid development within the Rousham Conservation Area that would detract from the protected vista from Rousham Park.

- The Oxfordshire Treescape Project considers that sites with multiple benefits for woodland opportunities are located along the M40, the edge of Banbury and around Middle Aston and Steeple Aston.

Retain the traditional character of the area's villages.

- Use new planting to soften the edges of new development, integrating it where possible with existing vegetation. Consider the biodiversity value of new planting as well as the landscape value.
- Retain important views to, and the setting of, important landmark buildings such as churches. Where Conservation Areas or Listed Buildings retain a strong relationship with open land avoid development that would weaken this link.
- New development should respect the scale, historic form and local vernacular of each village.
- New development should reflect the landscape setting of villages, by not encroaching beyond any topographical, visual or environmental limits (such as beyond the valley slope onto the brow of the hill, or undermining important gaps between neighbouring villages).
- Where there is important open space, which forms an integral part of the character of the village, such as at Steeple Aston, this space should remain undeveloped.

APPENDIX 6: FIELD SURVEY CHARACTER SHEET AND CHARACTER PHOTOS

Landscape Elements

Built Form

Farm Buildings	Urban	Brownfield	Camping	Wind Turbines	Masts	Tourism	Village
Settlement	Spite Walls	Quarry/Extraction	Golf Course	Power Stations	Industry	Pylons/OH Power Line	Scattered Farms
Urban Fringe	Military	Ecclesiastic	Country Houses	Estates	Hamlet	Isolated House	Brick
Sandstone	Slate	Concrete	Render	Granite	Metal	Timber	Stone
Prominent		Insignificant	Frequent	Infrequent	Strong influence on landscape character	Localised influence on landscape character	

Land Cover

Parkland	Informal Open Space	Golf Course	Restored Land	Mudflats	Active Quarry	Horticulture	Forestry
Amenity/Recreation	Wetland Meadow	Caravan Park	Derelict Land	Saltmarsh	Coast	Horsiculture	Woodland
Scrub	Marsh	Bog	Moor/Heath	Meadow	Agriculture	Rough Grassland	Bare Ground
Prominent		Insignificant	Frequent	Infrequent	Strong influence on landscape character	Localised influence on landscape character	

Farming

Type	Arable	Pasture	Mixed	Rough Grazing	Set Aside		Single Species Woodland	
Field Pattern	Rectangular fields	Irregular Fields	No discernible pattern	Ridge and Furrow	Large	Medium	Small	
Boundary Enclosure	Metal fences	Hedgerow with trees	Hedgerow without trees	Timber fences	Walls		Ditches	Watercourse
Boundary Condition	Good - well managed	Moderate - occasional management	Poor - Irregular management	No management				
Tree/hedge Species	Oak, Sycamore, Blackthorn, Hawthorn, Hazel, Birch, Ash							
Prominent		Frequent	Infrequent	Strong influence on landscape character	Localised influence on landscape character			

Woodland/Trees

Deciduous	Coppice	Shelterbelt	Wet Woodland	Isolated Trees	Scrub	Wind Sculpted	Avenue	Regenerating Scrub	Linear Strips
Coniferous	Pollarded	Plantation	Tree Clumps	Orchard	Alder/Willow Carr	Hedgerow Trees	Parkland	Mixed	Copse
Ages of Trees		Veteran	Over Mature	Mature	Semi mature	Young	Newly Planted	Dead	
Prominent		Insignificant	Frequent	Infrequent	Strong influence on landscape character	Localised influence on landscape character			

Hydrology

Drainage ditch/dyke	River-Engineered	Open Water	Natural Pond	Lake	Estuary	Fishing Lakes	
Stream	Reservoir	Coastal	Artificial Pond	Tidal	Raised Mires	River -natural	
Prominent		Insignificant	Frequent	Infrequent	Strong influence on landscape character	Localised influence on landscape character	

Corridor

Access Track	Canal	Green Lane	Footpath	CROW Access Land	Motorway	A-Road	B-Road
Railway	Lane	Bridleway	Cycle Route	Overhead Cables	Dis-used Railway	Telegraph Poles	Masts
Prominent		Insignificant	Frequent	Infrequent	Strong influence on landscape character	Localised influence on landscape character	

Landscape Visual Characteristics - Aesthetic and Perceptual

Pattern	Scale	Texture	Color	Complexity	Unity	Movement	Enclosure	Form	Tranquility
Random	Intimate	Smooth	Monochrome	Uniform	Unified	Dead	Tight	Straight	Inaccessible
Organised	Small	Textured	Muted	Simple	Interrupted	Still	Enclosed	Angular	Remote
Regular	Medium	Rough	Colorful	Diverse	Fragmented	Calm	Open	Curved	Vacant
Formal	Large	Rugged	Garish		Chaotic	Busy	Exposed	Sinuous	Peaceful
	Vast								Not Tranquil

Visual Landmarks

Landmark Views within character area	Landmark views outside character area	Landmark buildings	Landmark natural features
Detracting features within view:	None		

Extent of view:	Open	Enclosed	Short Distance Views	Long Distance Views	Expansive
Landscape Condition		Poor	Moderate	Strong	
Strength of Character		Weak	Moderate	Strong	

For Context Only



Character View 1 - Looking north from within the site



Character View 2 - Looking west from within the site

For Context Only



Character View 3 - Looking east from within the site



Character View 4 - Looking south from within the site

APPENDIX 7: PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT

Residential Development , Old Quarry House

Scale bar 1:1000
0 20 40 60 80 100

Accommodation Schedule

Type	Beds / Person	No of
A - Bungalow	2 bed / 3 per	1
B - Bungalow	2 bed / 4 per	2
C - Apartment	2 bed / 4 per	4
D - House	2 bed / 4per	1
E - House	3 bed / 5 per	5
F - House	3 bed / 5 per	1
G - House	3 bed / 5 per	2
H - House	4 bed / 6 per	3
I - House	4 bed / 8 per	4
		23

North



Indicative Site Layout

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4. Engineering information is indicative only and should be taken from structural engineers design.

Rev	Initial	Description / Amendment	Date
B	JE	Additional traffic calming added	02/07/2026
A	JE	New woodland area added	15/05/2026

Drawing title:	Indicative Site Layout
Project:	Residential Development Old Quarry House, Steeple Aston, Oxfordshire, OX25 4SS
Scale:	1:1000 @ A1
Date:	31.03.2026
Client:	[redacted]
Drawn by:	JE
Drawing No:	25.20.019.PL003 Rev B

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APPENDIX 8: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

INDICATIVE SHRUB PLANTING PALETTE

Species	Height/ spread cm	Pot size (Litres)	Habit	Min no. of breaks
Aucuba japonica Variegata	30-40	3L	Bushy	7
Bergenia cordifolia Purpurea	15-20	3L	-	-
Cotoneaster conspicuus Decorus	30-40	3L	Bushy	3
Cornus sericea 'Kelseyi'	40-60	3L	Branched	4
Cotoneaster 'Coral Beauty'	30-40	2L	Spreading	3
Carex oshimensis Evergold	20-30	2L	-	-
Cotoneaster 'Skogholm'	30-40	3L	Spreading	3
Cistus Silver Pink	30-40	3L	Bushy	4
Cornus sanguinea 'Midwinter Fire'	40-60	3L	Branched	3
Choisya ternata	30-40	3L	Bushy	7
Elaeagnus x ebbingei	60-80	3L	Bushy	3
Euonymus Emerald 'n' Gold	20-30	3L	Bushy	7
Euonymus Emerald Gaiety	20-30	3L	Bushy	7
Geranium 'Johnsons Blue'	20-30	2L	-	-
Hebe albicans Red Edge	20-30	3L	Bushy	5
Hebe rakaiensis	20-30	3L	Bushy	5
Hypericum Hidcote	30-40	3L	Bushy	5
Hebe 'Mrs Winder'	20-30	3L	Bushy	7
Heuchera 'Sugar Frosting'	20-30	2L	-	-
Lavandula Hidcote	20-30	3L	Bushy	5
Lonicera Bagessens Gold	30-40	3L	Bushy	3
Lonicera 'Maygreen'	30-40	2L	Bushy	3
Mahonia Appollo	30-40	3L	Bushy	3
Olearia haastii	30-40	3L	Bushy	2
Osmanthus burkwoodii	30-40	3L	Bushy	5
Potentilla Abbotswood	30-40	3L	Bushy	4
Potentilla Elizabeth	30-40	4L	Bushy	6
Potentilla Red Ace	30-40	3L	Bushy	4
Prunus Otto Luyken	30-40	3L	Bushy	3
Photoinia x Fraseri 'Red Robin'	40-60	3L	Branched	6
Rosa 'Kent'	30-40	3L	Bushy	4
Rosa 'Hertfordshire'	30-40	3L	Bushy	3
Rosa 'Suffolk'	30-40	3L	Bushy	4
Spiraea Anthony Waterer	30-40	3L	Branched	5
Symphoricarpos Hancock	40-60	3L	Branched	2
Sarcoccoa hookeriana	30-40	3L	Bushy	3
Sarcoccoa hummilis	30-40	3L	Bushy	3
Stachys lanata 'Silver Carpet'	30-40	3L	Bushy	3
Skimmia 'Kew White'	30-40	3L	Bushy	3
Senecio Sunshine	30-40	3L	Bushy	4
Vinca Minor	15-20	2L	-	-
Viburnum davidii	30-40	3L	Bushy	3
Viburnum tinus 'Eve Price'	30-40	3L	Bushy	7

TREE PLANTING

Species	Form	Girth cm	Height cm	Root condition
Acer campestre	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Alnus glutinosa	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Amelanchier lamarckii	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Betula pendula	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Carpinus betulus 'Frans Fontaine'	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Malus domestica	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Prunus avium	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Prunus Padus	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Prunus 'Rancho'	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Prunus 'Sunset Boulevard'	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Sorbus 'Golden Wonder'	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Quercus robur	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Tilia cordata Greenspire	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Sorbus aucuparia	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Sorbus commixta 'Embley'	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L

NATIVE WOODLAND TRANSPLANTS @ 2.0m cts in drifts of up to 7

Species	Root Condition	Age + Times Transpl	Height cm
Acer campestre (10%)	Bagged	2x	150-175
Alnus glutinosa (10%)	Bagged	2x	150-175
Betula pendula (10%)	Bagged	1+1	100-125
Crataegus monogyna (10%)	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Corylus avellana (10%)	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Ilex aquifolium (10%)	3L	-	40-60
Prunus avium (10%)	Bagged	2x	150-175
Malus sylvestris (10%)	Bagged	1+2	100-125
Quercus robur (10%)	Bagged	1u1	100-125
Salix caprea (10%)	Bagged	1+1	40-60

SINGLE SPECIES HEDGE PLANTING

Species	Height/ spread cm	Pot size (Litres)	Habit	Min no. of breaks	No. / m2
Carpinus betulus (hedge)	60-80	2L	Feathered	4	5/lin m
Fagus sylvatica (hedge)	60-80	2L	Feathered	4	5/lin m

NATIVE STRUCTURE MIX @ 1M CTRS

Species	Root Condition	Age + Times Transpl	Height cm
Acer campestre (10%)	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Crataegus monogyna (20%)	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Corylus avellana (10%)	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Cornus sanguineum (10%)	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Euonymus europaeus (10%)	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Ligustrum vulgare (10%)	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Prunus spinosa (10%)	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Viburnum lantana (10%)	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Viburnum opulus (10%)	Bagged	1+1	40-60

POND EDGE AND AQUATIC MARGINALS
(Planted randomly – up to 0.5m above and 0.3m below settled water level)

Species	Root condition	No. / m2
Potentilla palustris	P9/0.5lt	3
Alisma plantago-aquatica	P9/0.5lt	3
Mentha aquatica	P9/0.5lt	3
Veronica beccabunga	P9/0.5lt	3
Lythrum salicaria	P9/0.5lt	3
Potamogeton pectinatus	P9/0.5lt	3
Potamogeton crispus	P9/0.5lt	3
Ceratophyllum demersum	P9/0.5lt	3
Myriophyllum spicatum	P9/0.5lt	3
Persicaria amphibium	P9/0.5lt	3
Sagittaria sagittifolia	P9/0.5lt	3

Emorsgate EG8 Meadow Mixture for Wet Soils sown at 5gms/m2

Grasses

%	Latin name	Common name
12.5	Agrostis capillaris	Common Bent
3.75	Alopecurus pratensis	Meadow Foxtail (w)
3.75	Anthoxanthum odoratum	Sweet Vernal-grass (w)
3.75	Briza media	Quaking Grass (w)
32.5	Cynosurus cristatus	Crested Dogstail
2.5	Deschampsia cespitosa	Tufted Hair-grass (w)
35	Festuca rubra	Red Fescue
6.25	Schedonorus pratensis (Festuca pratensis)	Meadow Fescue
100		



KEY

Soft Landscaping

- Existing Trees Retained - Existing ground flora also retained in line with RPAs and BS: 5837
- Proposed Tree Planting
- Proposed Single Species Native Hedge Planting
- Proposed Mixed Native Scrub Planting
- Proposed Mixed Native Woodland Planting
- Proposed Shrub Planting
- Proposed Lawn Grass
- Existing Grassland
- Proposed Grassland - EG8 Meadow Mix for Wet Soils

Hard Landscaping

- Access - Tarmac
- Proposed Parking/Drives/Shared Surface - Block Paving, 240mm x 160m x 50mm
- Proposed Paving - 450mm x 450mm paving slabs
- Proposed 1.8m High Close Board Fencing
- Proposed 1.8m High Brick Wall

N

0 100m

Note: The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon.

Revision	Description	Date
-	First issue	6/6/26

LANDARB SOLUTIONS

Project:
The land north of Old Quarry House, Fenway, Steeple Aston

Description:
Landscape Strategy

Status:
For Planning

Scale:	Drawn I Checked	Date:
1:500 @A0	**DP MP**	**06/06/2026**

Job Number:	Drawing Number:	Revision:
LAS 995	**01**	**-**

APPENDIX 9: REPRESENTATIVE VIEWS



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 5D	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 125m	Visualisation Type	- Type 1
Lens make & focal length	- Canon EF 50mm, f/1.4 USM	Distance from site	- 0m	Horizontal Field of View	- 90˚
Date of photograph	- 16/02/26	Projection	- Cylindrical	Height of camera AGL	- 1.5m
OS grid reference	- 51°55'56.03"N,1°18'59.37"W	Sheet Size	- A1	Page size / Image size (mm)	- 841 x 297 / 820 x 240

VIEWPOINT 1 - 8

View from Fenway adjacent to entrance looking north-west



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 5D	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 127m	Visualisation Type	- Type 1
Lens make & focal length	- Canon EF 50mm, f/1.4 USM	Distance from site	- 32m	Horizontal Field of View	- 90˚
Date of photograph	- 16/02/26	Projection	- Cylindrical	Height of camera AGL	- 1.5m
OS grid reference	- 51°55'56.76"N,1°18'57.34"W	Sheet Size	- A1	Page size / Image size (mm)	- 841 x 297 / 820 x 240

VIEWPOINT 2 - 8

View from Fenway looking south-east



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 5D	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 128m	Visualisation Type	- Type 1
Lens make & focal length	- Canon EF 50mm, f/1.4 USM	Distance from site	- 166m	Horizontal Field of View	- 90˚
Date of photograph	- 11/02/26	Projection	- Cylindrical	Height of camera AGL	- 1.5m
OS grid reference	- 51°56'06.35"N,1°18'48.01"W	Sheet Size	- A1	Page size / Image size (mm)	- 841 x 297 / 820 x 240

VIEWPOINT 3 - 8

View from public right of way 364/5/10 looking south-west



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 5D	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 128m	Visualisation Type	- Type 1
Lens make & focal length	- Canon EF 50mm, f/1.4 USM	Distance from site	- 26m	Horizontal Field of View	- 90°
Date of photograph	- 11/02/26	Projection	- Cylindrical	Height of camera AGL	- 1.5m
OS grid reference	- 51°56'01.79"N,1°19'03.74"W	Sheet Size	- A1	Page size / Image size (mm)	- 841 x 297 / 820 x 240

VIEWPOINT 4 - 8

View from Coneygar Fields play area looking east



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 5D	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 129m	Visualisation Type	- Type 1
Lens make & focal length	- Canon EF 50mm, f/1.4 USM	Distance from site	- 181m	Horizontal Field of View	- 90˚
Date of photograph	- 11/02/26	Projection	- Cylindrical	Height of camera AGL	- 1.5m
OS grid reference	- 51°56'08.40"N,1°18'54.13"W	Sheet Size	- A1	Page size / Image size (mm)	- 841 x 297 / 820 x 240

VIEWPOINT 5 - 8

View from public right of way looking south-west



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 5D	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 128m	Visualisation Type	- Type 1
Lens make & focal length	- Canon EF 50mm, f/1.4 USM	Distance from site	- 77m	Horizontal Field of View	- 90˚
Date of photograph	- 11/02/26	Projection	- Cylindrical	Height of camera AGL	- 1.5m
OS grid reference	- 51°56'02.73"N,1°19'05.79"W	Sheet Size	- A1	Page size / Image size (mm)	- 841 x 297 / 820 x 240

VIEWPOINT 6 - 8

View from public right of way 364/4/10 looking east



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 5D	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 141m	Visualisation Type	- Type 1
Lens make & focal length	- Canon EF 50mm, f/1.4 USM	Distance from site	- 584m	Horizontal Field of View	- 90˚
Date of photograph	- 16/02/26	Projection	- Cylindrical	Height of camera AGL	- 1.5m
OS grid reference	- 51°56'02.57"N,1°19'28.52"W	Sheet Size	- A1	Page size / Image size (mm)	- 841 x 297 / 820 x 240

VIEWPOINT 7 - 8

View from A4260 Oxford Road looking east



Camera make & model	- Canon EOS 5D	Viewpoint height (AOD)	- 127m	Visualisation Type	- Type 1
Lens make & focal length	- Canon EF 50mm, f/1.4 USM	Distance from site	- 0m	Horizontal Field of View	- 90˚
Date of photograph	- 11/02/26	Projection	- Cylindrical	Height of camera AGL	- 1.5m
OS grid reference	- 51°55'56.76"N,1°18'57.34"W	Sheet Size	- A1	Page size / Image size (mm)	- 841 x 297 / 820 x 240

VIEWPOINT 8 - 8

View from Fenway adjacent site entrance looking north

APPENDIX 10: SUMMARY OF VISUAL EFFECT

Table 6.1 – Summary of Visual Effects

Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Year 1 – Scale of effect	Year 15 - scale of effect
Viewpoint 1 - View from Fenway adjacent to entrance looking north-west	Medium	Low	Minor neutral	Minor neutral
Viewpoint 2 - View from Fenway looking south-east	Medium	No change	No effect	No effect
Viewpoint 3 - View from public right of way 364/5/10 looking south-west	High	No change	No effect	No effect
Viewpoint 4 - View from Coneygar Fields play area looking east along site boundary	Medium	Medium	Moderate adverse	Minor adverse

Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Year 1 – Scale of effect	Year 15 - scale of effect
Viewpoint 5 - View from public right of way looking south-west	High	Low	Moderate adverse	Minor adverse
Viewpoint 6 - View from public right of way 364/4/10 looking east	High	No change	No effect	No effect
Viewpoint 7 - View from A4260 Oxford Road looking east	Medium	Negligible	Negligible neutral	Negligible neutral
Viewpoint 8 - View from Fenway adjacent site entrance looking north	Medium	Medium	Moderate adverse	Minor adverse