

E1.7

ES Chapter 7 - Landscape and Visual

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THE CROWN
 ESTATE

East Hemel

7. Landscape and Visual

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 This Chapter provides an assessment of the likely significant effects of the Development on landscape character as an environmental resource and on people's views or visual amenity. It has been prepared by Gillespies.

7.1.2 The assessment is based on the characteristics of the Site and surrounding area and the key parameters of the Development as detailed in **ES Volume 2: Chapter 5: The Development**.

7.1.3 This Chapter is supported by the following technical appendices presented in **ES Volume 3**:

- **Appendix 7.1: Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology** – includes the methods used to determine the baseline conditions, the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors and the predicted magnitude of impact and sets out the approach to judging the level and significance of likely landscape and visual effects.
- **Appendix 7.2: Visual Amenity Assessment** – includes an assessment of the effects of the Development on a series of representative viewpoints within the 3km study area.
- **Appendix 7.3: Landscape Character Assessment** – includes an assessment of the effects of the Development on the identified landscape character areas within the 3km study area.
- **Appendix 7.4: Visualisations** – includes a series of wirelines and post-construction visualisations for a selection of the representative viewpoints, produced in accordance with Landscape Institute Guidance (Landscape Institute, 2019).
- **Appendix 7.5: Verified View Methodology** – used for wireline images.

7.1.4 All supporting figures are included at A3 as a standalone set of documents alongside this Report, with inset duplicate plates included within the text for ease of reference. All high-resolution Viewpoint Photographs (Figure 7.8) are included at A3 alongside this report and are not included as inset plates.

Scope of the Assessment

7.1.5 The assessment of landscape effects considers physical changes to the landscape as well as changes in landscape character. It also considers changes to areas designated for scenic or landscape qualities.

7.1.6 The assessment of visual effects focuses on public views experienced by those groups of people who are likely to be most sensitive to change arising from the Development. These include:

- Local communities (where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area);
- People using recreational routes including public rights of way and cycle routes; and

- People visiting recreational features and attractions (some of which may have historic or cultural heritage importance).
- 7.1.7 Potentially significant landscape and visual effects (including cumulative effects) are identified, including those relating to the demolition and construction stage ('the Works') and the completed development stage ('the completed and operational Development'). Reference is made throughout the assessment to the maximum parameters, set out in the Parameter Plans and Assessment Plans (refer to **ES Volume 2, Chapter 5: The Development**); the exception to this being the proposed acoustic bunds / barriers in the vicinity of the eastern boundaries, which are assessed as specific parameter heights, but also without any detailed design consideration. In addition to this, detailed (full) elements are included for the assessment relating to the proposed road junctions at Redbourn Road (Hemel Hempstead Road B487) and Breakspear Way (A414).
- 7.1.8 The approach and methodology presented in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.1** and used in the preparation of this landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) is based on guidance provided in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA3) (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013)¹. GLVIA3 is the established best practice guidance for landscape and visual impact assessment.
- 7.1.9 In addition to GLVIA3, the following documents were used for aspects of the assessment:
- Landscape Institute (2021) Technical Guidance Note 02/21 Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations;
 - Natural England (2019) An Approach to Landscape Sensitivity Assessment – to Inform Spatial Planning and Land Management;
 - Landscape Institute (2019) Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals; and
 - Notes and Clarifications on aspects of the 3rd Edition Guidelines on Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3) LITGN-2024-01.

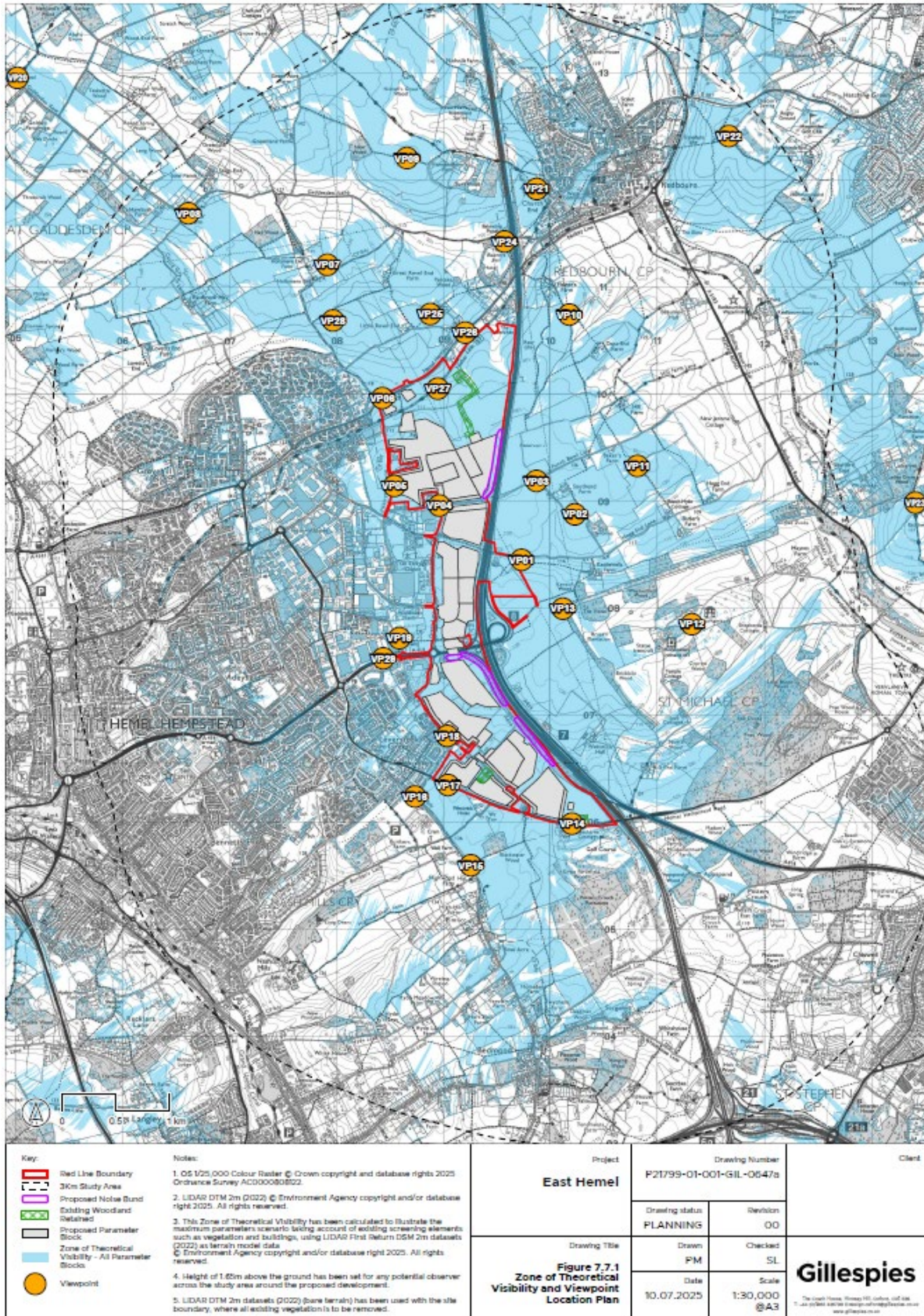
Technical Scope

- 7.1.10 The technical scope of the assessment has considered the following:
- Potential effects on landscape elements including field boundaries, woods and other features;
 - Potential effects on sensitive landscape receptors including local landscape character areas; and
 - Potential effects on sensitive visual receptors including views from the Ifield Conservation Area and its setting².

¹ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA3)

² The assessment of effects on the setting of the Conservation Area and its setting are presented in ES Volume, Chapter 10: Cultural Heritage.

7.1.11 The Chilterns National Landscape (NL) (previously known as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or AONB) is located within the study area 2km to the north-west of the Site at its closest point. Due to the intervening mature woodland blocks and vegetation on field boundaries, there would be no intervisibility with the designation and therefore no significant effects on the special qualities or the statutory purpose. The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) of the maximum parameters for the Development provided on **Figure 7.7.1** (see inset below) shows some areas of theoretical visibility, however the fieldwork and viewpoint photography shown in **Figure-set 7.8: Viewpoints 8 and 20** (see below), demonstrate this lack of actual visibility. This is coupled with the effect of distance from the Site, and therefore no further assessment is required.



Viewpoint 08: Gaddesden Lane

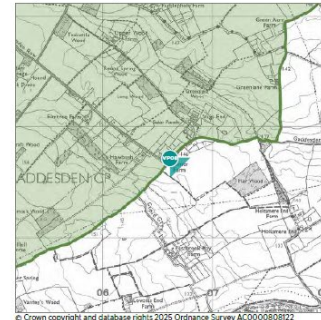
View from the boundary of the Chilterns National Landscape (AONB)

Viewpoint Location and Photo Details

Location (Easting / Northing)	506615 , 21892
Approx. Elevation	146m AOD
General Direction of View	SE 125°
Approx. Distance to Proposed Development	2.5km
Weather / Visibility	Clear / Very Good
Camera	Nikon D3200, Nikkor AF-S 18-55mm lens

Viewpoint located on Gaddesden Lane which is the edge of the Chilterns National Landscape (AONB). Represents views for people travelling within the National Landscape (AONB) and groups of properties along Gaddesden Lane.

Viewpoint Location Map



Baseline Panorama (50mm equivalent, 90° horizontal field of view) (LI TGN/06/19 Type 1 - Annotated photograph for information only)



Gillespies | 7.8.9

Viewpoint 20: Gaddesden Row

View from within the Chilterns National Landscape (AONB) near Gaddesden Row School

Viewpoint Location and Photo Details

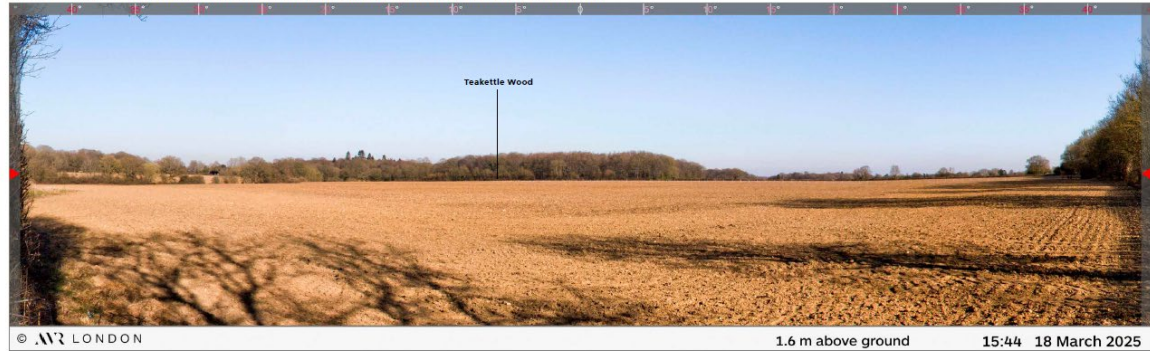
Location (Easting / Northing)	505018 , 212958
Approx. Elevation	163m AOD
General Direction of View	SE 120°
Approx. Distance to Proposed Development	4.5km
Weather / Visibility	Clear / Very Good
Camera	Nikon D3200, Nikkor AF-S 18-55mm lens

Viewpoint located on the Chiltern Way and Great Gaddesden 082 within the Chilterns National Landscape (AONB). Represents views for recreational user of footpaths within the National Landscape (AONB).

Viewpoint Location Map



Baseline Panorama (50mm equivalent, 90° horizontal field of view) (LI TGN/06/19 Type 1 - Annotated photograph for information only)



Gillespies | 7.8.22

Spatial Scope

7.1.12 The study area for the LVIA, which is shown on **Figure 7.2** (inset below), extends 3km from the boundary of the Site. This distance was determined by the nature of the surrounding environment, and by the physical scale of the proposals and the likely distance over which they would be sufficiently visible to give rise to significant effects. It was also informed by the production of the ZTV plan, shown on **Figures 7.7.1** (above) and **7.7.2** (inset below) which give an indication of potential visibility of the Development as described in Section 7.2 (Baseline Methodology). The extent of the study area was given careful consideration and review and was set at 3km after production of the ZTV using light detection and ranging (LiDAR) data, which shows that most areas beyond this distance would be screened by intervening vegetation and buildings. Even if the Development was visible from locations beyond 3km, at this distance the effects would not be considered significant as they would be barely perceptible to the naked human eye.

Temporal Scope

- 7.1.13 The assessment has considered landscape and visual effects arising during the demolition and construction stage which would be expected to be temporary and short to long term (i.e. 5-16 years) in nature and from the completed development stage which would be expected to be permanent and long-term in nature (i.e. more than 10 years).

7.2 Assessment Methodology and Significance Criteria

- 7.2.1 This Section summarises the methodology used for the landscape and visual assessment. It builds on the general assessment methodology presented in **ES Volume 2, Chapter 2: EIA Methodology** and is described in detail in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.1**.

Baseline Methodology

- 7.2.2 The following tools are used in establishing the baseline conditions for this assessment:

Desk Study – Data Sources

- 7.2.3 The known or predicated current and future baseline environment described in this section has been informed by the following data sources:

- Natural England (2013) National Character Area Profile³: NCA 110: Chilterns;
- Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessments⁴;
- Chilterns Management Plan, June 2025⁵;
- Chilterns NL Boundary Review – cancelled by Natural England June 2025;
- St Albans City and District Council (SADC) Draft Local Plan;
- SADC Broad Locations Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (2024); and
- Dacorum Draft Local Plan to 2041.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility Mapping

- 7.2.4 A ZTV map was produced to inform the assessment. This illustrates theoretical visibility during the completed development stage is shown on **Figure 7.7.1** (see inset above). The ZTV was generated in Geographic Information System (GIS) using an Ordnance Survey Terrain 5 Digital Terrain Model and utilises LiDAR elevation data to account for screening by natural and built components in the landscape, such as woodland, individual trees, or buildings.

³ Natural England (2013) National Character Area Profiles, viewed online at <https://nationalcharacterareas.co.uk>

⁴ St Albans District (no date); 'Hertfordshire Landscape Character Area Statements'. Hertfordshire County Council

⁵ Caring for the Chilterns forever & for everyone: The area of outstanding natural beauty management plan for the Chilterns National Landscape, 2025-2030, Chilterns Conservation Board, June 2025

As such the extent of visibility is reduced in comparison with a bare earth ZTV and gives a more realistic representation of the visibility of the Development.

- 7.1.1 As the ZTV is theoretical, fieldwork was undertaken to identify local screening elements within the landscape and confirm locations from where the different elements of the project would be visible (i.e., a more realistic scenario). The results of the fieldwork informed the assessment.

Field Study

- 7.2.5 The findings of the initial desk-based study were supplemented with a programme of seasonal Site surveys. These included surveys undertaken during both the summer (2024 and 2025) and winter (2025) months to fully understand the landscape and visual baseline and likely effects.

- 7.2.6 The purpose of the Site visits was to:

- Obtain baseline photographs;
- Confirm the extent of the study area;
- Verify information in the published landscape character assessments;
- Gain an understanding of perceptual landscape characteristics;
- Confirm viewpoint locations;
- Undertake the viewpoint survey; and
- Identify the likely significant landscape and visual effects.

- 7.2.7 In addition, winter photography was undertaken in 2025 for the wirelines and photomontages. During this visit it was confirmed that existing photography from previous visits was still valid as there has been minimal change to the baseline environment in the intervening period.

Assessment Methodology

- 7.2.8 The assessment of landscape and visual effects follows the methodology presented in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.1: Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology**. Effects during construction and the completed development stage are assessed and reported separately. Demolition is assumed to give rise to similar effects to construction.

- 7.2.9 The assessment has adopted the following general approach:

- Identify key legislation, policy and guidance relevant to the assessment approach and determination of baseline characteristics;
- Identify a study area, which includes the Site and the wider landscape around it which the Development may influence (the wider landscape);

- Establish baseline conditions (including future baseline) against which the changes resulting from the Development are assessed;
- Identify landscape and visual receptors and appraisal of the value of the existing landscape or view;
- Determine the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors to likely change arising from the Development through consideration of the value of the landscape or the view and the susceptibility of landscape and visual receptors to change arising from the Development;
- Assess each identified effect on landscape and visual receptors in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced, and its duration and reversibility. This assessment informs judgements regarding the magnitude of impact;
- Determine the level of each landscape and visual effect by considering the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of impact to give an overall judgement on the level of effect applying informed professional judgment;
- Categorise each landscape or visual effect as beneficial, adverse, or neutral; and
- Define significance of identified effect based on professional judgement.

7.2.10 The assessment of landscape and visual effects within this Chapter has considered both the demolition and construction and completed development stages of the Development.

7.2.11 As explained in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.1**, the landscape assessment was based on the character areas defined in published landscape character assessments and a Site-specific local landscape character assessment, whilst the visual assessment was informed by a viewpoint assessment from a selection of agreed representative public viewpoints.

7.2.12 Viewpoints were selected in consultation with Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) and SADC Officers to represent the following range of receptors and views:

- *'Representative viewpoints, selected to represent the experience of different types of visual receptor, where larger numbers of viewpoints cannot all be included individually and where the significant effects are unlikely to differ - for example, certain points may be chosen to represent the views of users of particular public footpaths and bridleways;*
- *Specific viewpoints, chosen because they are key and sometimes promoted viewpoints within the landscape, including for example specific local visitor attractions, viewpoints in areas of particularly noteworthy visual and/or recreational amenity such as landscapes with statutory landscape designations, or viewpoints with particular cultural landscape associations; and,*
- *Illustrative viewpoints, chosen specifically to demonstrate a particular effect or specific issues, which might, for example, be the restricted visibility at certain locations'.* (GLVIA3 Paragraph 6.19).

7.2.13 The viewpoints are not intended to illustrate every possible location from where there might be a view of the Development, but rather to present a selection of representative, specific and illustrative views to inform decisions about the Development's likely landscape and visual effects.

- 7.2.14 The viewpoint assessment is presented in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.2: Visual Amenity Assessment**.
- 7.2.15 Each viewpoint includes baseline photography and a selection of locations agreed with the local planning authorities, have been taken forward as wireline visualisations. These provide an indication of the change in the view based on the maximum Parameter Plans and Assessment Plans of the Development. These are presented in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.4: Visualisations**.

Cumulative Stage

- 7.2.16 The cumulative stage visual impact assessment focused on the additional cumulative change which may result from the introduction of the Development, when considered alongside other Cumulative Schemes in the area. The objective of the assessment was to identify whether impacts from several developments, which individually might be insignificant, could cumulatively result in a significant effect upon visual receptors.
- 7.2.17 The list of Cumulative Schemes for inclusion within the cumulative assessment is presented **Appendix 7.2** and effects were reviewed with respect to both landscape and visual receptors. The assessment is presented in **Table 7.8** for Cumulative Schemes which are specifically relevant to potential landscape and visual consideration.
- 7.2.18 The cumulative assessment excluded any recently completed developments and schemes currently under construction and due to be completed prior to the completion of the Development. This is because these were accounted for in the baseline and future baseline conditions which were established as part of the main LVIA.
- 7.2.19 The approach to assessing the level of importance and potential significance of cumulative landscape or visual effects used the same principles as the approach to the LVIA set out in the methodology at **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.1**.

Assumptions and Limitations

- 7.2.20 The assessment has relied on data provided by The Crown Estate, Avison Young, David Lock Associates, Prior and Partners, Turner and Townsend, Expedition, SLR, Cotswold Archaeology, Ramboll (formerly Temple Group) and Gillespies' landscape design team. It has been assumed that these data sets have been reported correctly.
- 7.2.21 For the purposes of the demolition and construction stage assessment, given that construction will take place over circa 17-years (see **ES Volume 2, Chapter 6: The Works**), it is recognised that the landscape and visual effects will change as the Development is built out incrementally. Nonetheless, it has been assumed for the purpose of providing a 'worst-case' assessment in this Chapter that the peak construction period will comprise the full extent of the Development being developed simultaneously. As such, all construction effects are considered to constitute an absolute worst-case effect, and in many cases the effects will be less due to the screening and filtering from buildings and landscaping built out in earlier phases, similarly earlier phases of construction works will inevitably be limited to localised areas of the site before wider works have commenced due to the scale of the overall Development.

7.2.22 Completed Development effects within the Chapter have been assessed based on the completion of the Development, referred to as 'Year 1'. This assessment constitutes the perceived worst-case scenario and therefore reported as the pre-mitigation effects.

7.2.23 As is common for the assessment of landscape and visual effects a further completed development scenario has been reported, termed 'Year 15', which accounts for the maturity of the embedded landscaping described in **ES Volume 2, Chapter 5: The Development**. This is not Year 15 in the construction programme, but refers to a future year, 15 years post-construction when planting will have matured.

7.2.24 To inform the conclusions of the Year 15 scenario several assumptions have been in relation to growth rates for native tree species as set out in **Table 7.1**.

Table 7.1: Assumed Growth Rates for Native Tree Species

Year of Development	Tree Sizes (m)
Tree Sizes at Year 1	Transplant planted at 0.6m height
	Feathered planted at 1.5m height
	Standard planted at 3.5m height
	Extra heavy standards planted at 4.5m height
Tree Sizes at Year 15	Transplant grown to 5m height
	Feathered grown to 6m height
	Standards grown to 8m height
	Extra heavy standards grown to 9m height

7.2.25 Night-time effects have been considered for both landscape and visual receptors. For visual, receptors considered include occupiers of residential properties, people travelling along rural roads and residents staying in hotels. Other receptors are excluded on the basis that either they would generally not be present late at night (e.g. recreational receptors) or their immediate context would be brightly lit if they were present at night (e.g. employment / formal sports).

7.2.26 Assumptions have been made with regards to the detailed junction proposals on the A414 and B487, which are included within the hybrid aspect of this outline application. Full landscape proposals are not submitted which would enable mitigation to be fully assessed. Therefore, a combination of assumptions has been made based upon the information included in the Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan, the information within the Development Specification and professional experience of what has been achieved previously in similar schemes.

Policy Context

7.2.27 The assessment has been informed by the following legislation and policies:

- National Legislation and Policy:

- European Landscape Convention;
- Tree Preservation Orders; and
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2024) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) with an emphasis on Chapter 15 conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- Local Policy as noted above in paragraph on 'Data Sources':
 - DBC Draft Local Plan to 2041;
 - SADC Draft Local Plan; and
 - Landscape Capacity Studies and the Evidence library – supporting the DBC Draft Local Plan to 2041⁶.

Significance Criteria

7.2.28 The general criteria used to assess whether an effect is significant or not is set out in **ES Volume 2, Chapter 2: EIA Methodology**. Further detail specific to landscape and visual assessment is outlined below.

Receptor Sensitivity / Value Criteria

7.2.29 The sensitivity of both landscape and visual receptors has been defined on a scale of high, medium or low.

7.2.30 In accordance with GLVIA3 the determination of landscape receptor sensitivity has been informed by a consideration of the combination of the 'value' (defined as part of the baseline) of the landscape receptor and its 'susceptibility' to change. Professional judgement has been applied when considering the two aspects together.

7.2.31 Visual receptor sensitivity has been determined in a similar manner, through a consideration of the value attached to a particular view (identified as part of the baseline) and susceptibility to change. Again, professional judgement is applied when considering both aspects together.

7.2.32 Views can be experienced by several receptors with differing degrees of susceptibility. As such, where such instances occur for the purpose of assessment the overall sensitivity has been based on the visual receptor with the highest susceptibility.

7.2.33 Further details of the approach to determination of sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors, including indicative criteria are provided in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.1: Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology**.

7.2.34 Judgements on the value attached to the landscape or view are unrelated to the nature of the development being proposed, whilst judgements on susceptibility vary depending on the key characteristics of the landscape or the type of visual receptor.

Impact Magnitude Criteria

⁶ <https://letstalk.dacorum.gov.uk/local-plan-to-2041-and-evidence/widgets/104908/documents>

- 7.2.35 The magnitude of impact has been defined on a scale of high, medium or low.
- 7.2.36 As explained in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.1: Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology**, the magnitude of impact was determined through consideration of the likely size and scale of the change, its duration and reversibility and its geographic extent. Professional judgment was applied to balance the various factors.
- 7.2.37 Further details of the approach to determination of sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors, including indicative criteria are provided in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.1**.

Scale of Effect Criteria

- 7.2.38 The final step in the assessment is to predict the level of effect and where likely significant landscape and visual effects that may arise.
- 7.2.39 Gillespies' method does not use matrices to determine the significance level of the effect but instead adopts the *'overall profile'* approach whereby, *'all the judgements against the individual criteria can be arranged in a table to provide an overall profile of each identified effect'*. GLVIA3 Page 92, para 5.55. This determination requires the application of professional judgement and experience to take on board the many different variables which are given different weight according to Site-specific and location-specific considerations in every instance.
- 7.2.40 Once the judgements have been made, their distribution is analysed to take account of the geographical extent of the effects across the study area and their duration / reversibility. Permanent effects of long-term duration are considered more likely to have a greater level of effect and be significant, than short-term temporary effects.
- 7.2.41 The level of effect is described as major, moderate, minor, or negligible. Major and moderate effects are typically considered significant. Where effects are deemed to be between these judgements, then this will be stated e.g. minor / moderate.
- 7.2.42 Whilst a matrix has been included at **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.1**, in accordance with GLVIA3, judgements have been supported by clear and accessible narrative explanations of the rationale underlying the assessment made for each landscape or visual receptor. Example criteria for judgements is provided in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.1**.
- 7.2.43 The scale of effect is defined as major, moderate, minor or negligible. It should be emphasised that because landscape and visual effects are not quantifiable, each of the four categories covers a broad range of effects and represents a continuum or sliding scale.
- 7.2.44 In accordance with **ES Volume 2, Chapter 2: EIA Methodology**, moderate and major effects are considered significant in EIA terms.
- 7.2.45 Duration of effect has been described as short, medium or long-term, in accordance with the criteria set out in **ES Volume 2, Chapter 2: EIA Methodology**.

Nature of Effect Criteria

7.2.46 The direction of change for each landscape effect is categorised as beneficial, adverse, or neutral as follows:

- **Beneficial** – the Development, or part of it, would appear in keeping with existing landscape character and / or would make a beneficial visual and / or physical contribution to key landscape characteristics. Removal of uncharacteristic or unsightly features would also be a beneficial change;
- **Neutral** – this situation may arise if a characteristic element or feature of the landscape or view is replaced with a different element or feature of similar quality. Therefore, it is possible for there to be a major magnitude of impact but with a neutral effect overall as the new element or feature, although different in character and appearance, is of equal quality to that currently experienced in the landscape; or
- **Adverse** – the Development, or part of it, would be perceived as an uncharacteristic or detracting component in the context of existing landscape character and would have an adverse visual and/ or physical effect on key landscape characteristics.

Consultation

7.2.47 An EIA Scoping Report was submitted to SADC in December 2024 setting out the baseline conditions, extent of the study area, viewpoint selection and landscape character constraints, and the approach to carrying out the LVIA in relation to the construction and operation of the Development. The following scoping responses were received and have been considered. **Table 7.2** below summarises the key EIA Scoping Opinion responses and separate consultations that have been undertaken with respect to this LVIA.

Table 7.2: Summary of Consultation

Consultee and Form / Date of Consultation	Summary of Comments	Where in this Chapter Comments are Addressed
HCC Landscape 7 th January 2025	Comments regarding visual effects and the ZTV as the scheme evolves.	<p>Winter photography used for Viewpoints to represent visual receptors (Figure 7.8).</p> <p>Wireframe visualisations produced using maximum parameters of the outline proposals (Appendix 7.4).</p> <p>Include LCAs covering Chilterns NL and Gorhambury Estate in the Assessment (Section 7.4).</p> <p>Re-run the ZTV when the parameter plans are developed and include additional views as required – VPs 25, 26, 27, and 29 were added (Section 7.4, Table 7.3, Figure 7.7.1).</p> <p>Cumulative Impact Assessment included (Section 7.8)</p>
HCC Countryside and Right of Way January 2025	<p>Comments relevant to Transport Assessment and LVIA</p> <p>Consider views from PRowS AND other active travel routes and cycleways.</p>	<p>Views from PRowS, and other permissive paths and non-designated routes have been included in the LVIA (Section 7.4, Table 7.3, Figure 7.7.1)</p> <p>Quietways proposed where highways dissect the Site (Section 7.5)</p>

Consultee and Form / Date of Consultation	Summary of Comments	Where in this Chapter Comments are Addressed
HCC Ecology January 2025	Lighting is to be given consideration within the Assessment, albeit a full lighting assessment not possible due to outline application.	Lighting observations made throughout the visual assessment for all visual receptors (Appendix 7.2)
PPA meetings Autumn 2024 – Autumn 2025	Reviews of ZTV in relation to various phases and parcels of development. Views from Gorhambury House to be tested. Include Cumulative Impacts – especially North Hemel effects in combination. Various approaches to assessment clarified, additional views confirmed, landscape designations confirmed.	Block massing testing undertaken with wireframe visualisations to inform maximum height parameters. ZTVs generated with whole Development and alternative with Commercial Area only (Figure 7.7.1 and 7.7.2) Series of photography for Gorhambury House taken and single VP selected with LPA approval (Vp 12) Cumulative Impact Assessment included (Section 7.8) Design development and embedded mitigation described (Section 7.5) Baseline information clarified as basis for assessment (Section 7.4)
DRP Presentation 01 and 02 December 2024 and March 2025	Consider the Site in 3D to understand topography and how development sits in the landscape – immediate and surrounding. Demonstrate understanding of landscape outside of the redline boundary. Strengthen the character of the green spaces and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANG)	Massing testing undertaken with wireframe visualisations. Adjustments made to parameter parcels in relation to interface with surrounding landscape (Section 7.5) Detailed baseline fieldwork and research undertaken and fed back into design development (Section 7.5) Information assessed during LVIA process fed back into Parameter Plans and Development Specification re Landscape Character and embedded mitigation (Section 7.5)

7.3 Relevant Baseline Conditions

7.3.1 A general description of the Site and its surroundings is presented in **ES Volume 2, Chapter 1: Introduction** and **Chapter 3: Existing Land Uses and Activities**. This Section provides baseline information specifically related to landscape character and visual amenity of the study area.

Published Landscape Character Assessment

National Character Areas

7.3.2 England is divided into 159 National Character Areas (NCAs), which are defined by their landscape character, biodiversity, and geodiversity. These Natural England produced Character areas have been reviewed as part of the

assessment, the Site falls within National Character Area 110: Chilterns. *'The Chilterns form the north western edge of the chalk aquifer that underlies the London basin. These soft rocks form a steep, north west facing escarpment and a more gentle 'dip slope' to the south east [in the vicinity of the Site]. Small streams flow through larger valleys on the dip slope and from the foot of the escarpment. The upper reaches of these streams are often dry. The River Thames cuts through the escarpment at the Goring Gap in the south'*⁷. The area includes the lower-lying substantial settlements of Luton, Dunstable, Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted, Chesham, Amersham and High Wycombe. It is also crossed by sections of the M40 and M1 motorway corridors. This NCA is one of the most wooded lowland landscapes in the country with woodland covering 14 per cent of the NCA. The majority of woodland is broadleaved and much is native beechwood. The NCA is determined to be *'mixed change, mainly declining'* in terms of the Super Landscape Objectives (SLO) on which G1a of the Outcome Indicator Framework for the 25 Year Environment Plan (DEFRA) reports. The Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEO) recognise the urban fringes and growth areas can provide opportunity to create or enhance green infrastructure to ensure good access to countryside.

7.3.3 Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEO) recognise the urban fringes and growth areas can provide opportunity to create or enhance green infrastructure to ensure good access to countryside. The SEO also identifies several opportunities for enhancement, of which the following is particularly relevant to the Site:

- *'SEO 4: Enhance local distinctiveness and create or enhance green infrastructure within existing settlements and through new development, particularly in relation to the urban fringe and growth areas such as Luton. Ensure that communities can enjoy good access to the countryside.'*⁸

7.3.4 It is considered that, whilst these assessments inform the context for county and local character assessments, they do not provide a sufficient level of detail appropriate to the nature of effects likely to arise at a local level as a result of the Development. Therefore, in line with the recommendations of GLVIA3, to ensure that the scale of assessment is appropriate and proportionate to the scale of the Development, NCAs have not been considered further as part of the assessment.

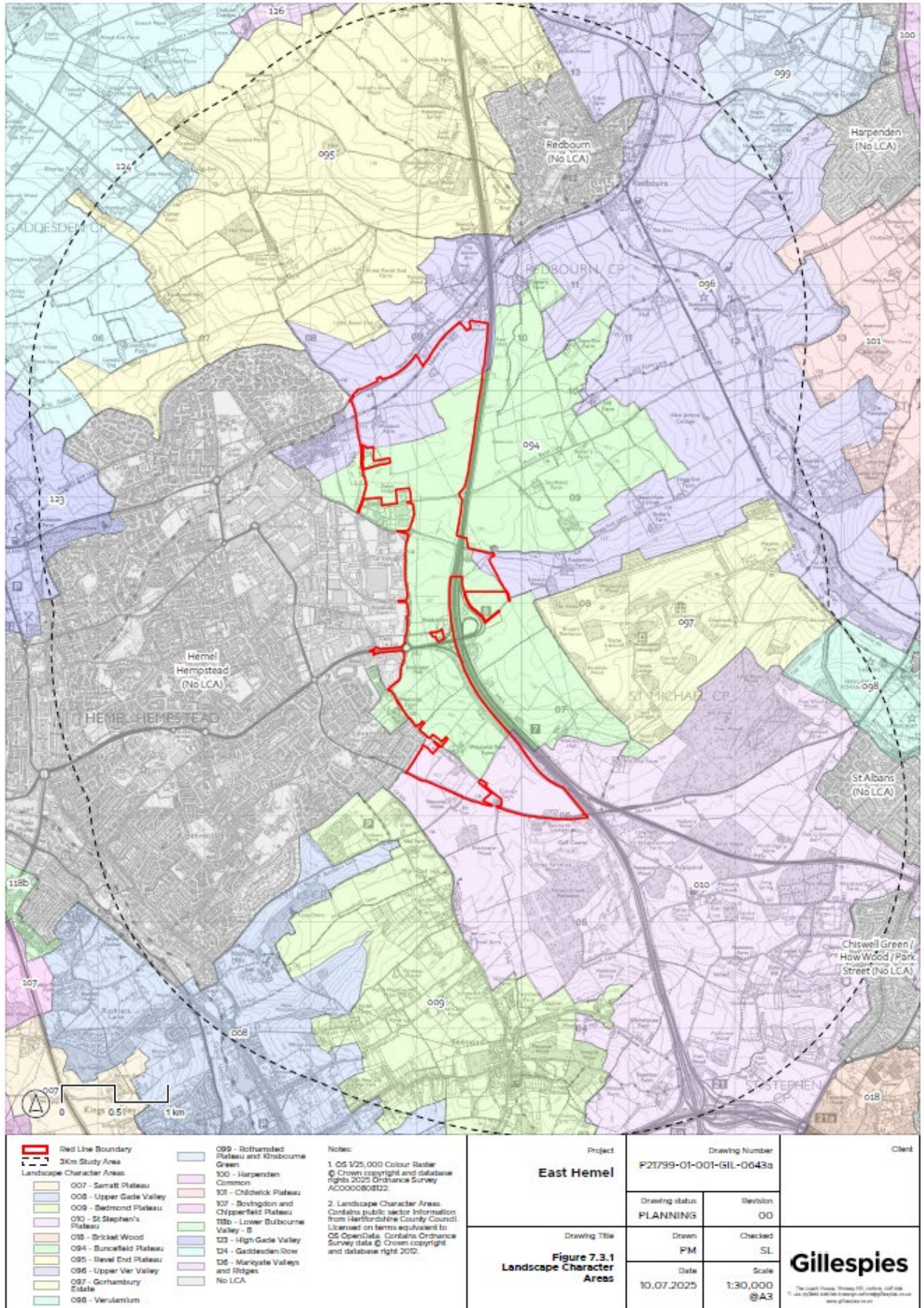
County and Local Character Areas

7.3.5 At the County Level, the Site is characterised through the Hertfordshire District and Borough Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) undertaken between 2000 and 2005. This work divides the County into local authority scale landscape character assessments, and the Landscape Character Assessment for Dacorum⁹ (2004) therefore represents the local scale of published LCAs for this LVIA. LCAs covering the site and immediate surroundings are shown on **Figure 7.3.1** (inset below), the Site is covered predominantly by LCA094 – Buncefield Plateau, with a small southern area lying within LCA 010 – St Stephen's Plateau, and small northern area lying within LCA 096 – Upper Ver Valley.

⁷ <https://nationalcharacterareas.co.uk/chilterns/>

⁸ <https://nationalcharacterareas.co.uk/chilterns/statement-of-environmental-opportunity/>

⁹ [https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/planning-development/planning-strategic-planning/supplementary-planning-documents-\(spds\)](https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/planning-development/planning-strategic-planning/supplementary-planning-documents-(spds))



7.3.6 Other adjacent LCAs or those within close proximity and falling inside the Study Area include: LCA 097 – Gornsbury Estate to the east of the M1; LCA 095 – Revel End Plateau which incorporates the margins of the

Chiltern NL; and LCA 009 – Bedmond Plateau. Beyond these it is not considered that development on the site of this scale would have any potential to lead to impacts on the landscape character, due to the separation from topography, development or intervening vegetation.

LCA094 – Buncefield Plateau

7.3.7 The vast majority of the Site is located in this LCA, which is dominated by the M1 motorway and the urban edge of Hemel Hempstead where much of the historic field pattern has been disrupted. There are no significant areas of woodland, but a network of lanes bounded by treed hedgerows are noticeable to the east of Hemel Hempstead along Cherry Tree Lane and Punchbowl Lane. Tranquillity is affected by the presence of motorway traffic and incidents of fly tipping are common on the lanes giving a neglected appearance. The plateau landscape and presence of the motorway limits views, although views within the character area are quite extensive, dominated by industrial influences; there are views towards the industrial edge from higher ground to the east.

7.3.8 The key characteristics of this LCA 094¹⁰ are:

- *'arable farmland*
- *upland and dry valleys*
- *M1 transport corridor*
- *discontinuous cultural and field patterns*
- *commercial an industrial urban fringe influence*
- *long views*
- *narrow lanes and isolated properties'* (p.29).

7.3.9 Distinctive features are identified as Buncefield industrial development, oil depot, and overhead power lines. The Community View (as identified by HCC in the Landscape Character Assessment for LCA 094) is that the area is NOT regarded as a distinctive landscape. The landscape condition is recorded as being 'poor', in conjunction with a 'strong' sense of character, resulting in the recommendation to *'restore condition to maintain character'*. Strategy and guidelines for achieving this are set out in the published Assessment, and these are drawn upon later in this Chapter, with regards to embedded landscape design mitigation.

LCA 010 - St Stephen's Plateau

7.3.10 This LCA covers the southernmost 1/4 (approximately) of the Site, and is dissected by the M1, M25 and M10 motorways. In the vicinity of the Site, the LCA contains several large mixed woodlands which create a local sense of enclosure but are not common throughout the remainder of this area; wooded horizons are also common in and near the Site.

¹⁰ <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/environment-and-planning/landscape/landscape-character-assessments/area094.pdf>

7.3.11 The Key characteristics of this LCA 010¹¹ are:

- *'undulating plateau to north, gently sloping to south east*
- *medium / large open arable fields throughout*
- *visually interlocking mixed woodlands to north*
- *significant extent of motorways and interchanges with associated earthworks, lights and traffic*
- *narrow winding lanes with sparse clipped hedgerows*
- *built edge of urban settlements to east*
- *dispersed settlement with scattered farmsteads' (p.25).*

7.3.12 The noted distinctive features are not in proximity to the Site; the landscape near the M1 / M25 is viewed to be *'of little regard'* by the Community with the evergreen plantations near Potterscrouch (1km to the south-east of the Site) being *'valued'*. The landscape condition is recorded as being *'moderate'*, in conjunction with a *'weak'* sense of robustness, resulting in the recommendation to *'improve and reinforce'*. Strategy and guidelines for achieving this are set out in the published Assessment, and these are drawn upon later in this Chapter, with regards to embedded landscape design mitigation.

LCA 096 – Upper Ver Valley

7.3.13 This LCA covers the northernmost area of the Site, approximately 75Ha. The LCA is noted for extensive open views and gentle slopes, where large arable fields are located on the slopes coupled with smaller fields on lower lying land.

7.3.14 The Key characteristics of this LCA 096¹² are:

- *'narrow strip of wetland habitats along valley floor south of Redbourn*
- *cultural pattern and historic settlements follows the line of the river*
- *open, gently undulating valley slopes*
- *large arable fields*
- *discrete woodland blocks to north of the area, including conifers*
- *isolated settlement*
- *lack of field boundaries on valley slopes*
- *hedge banks along lanes crossing slopes*

¹¹ <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/environment-and-planning/landscape/landscape-character-assessments/area010.pdf>

¹² <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/environment-and-planning/landscape/landscape-character-assessments/area096.pdf>

- *mature willow and poplar plantations in the floodplain*
- *pockets of pasture along urban edges and the dry valley between Redbourn and Hemel Hempstead* (p.37)

7.3.15 The noted distinctive features relevant to the Site are the M1 corridor, as well as the Nickey Line footpath / cycleway (disused railway line), and the Aubrey Hill Fort north-east of the Site. There is no established community view published but there is an assumption that this is a 'valued' landscape. The landscape condition is recorded as being 'good', in conjunction with a 'moderate' strength of character, resulting in the recommendation to 'conserve and strengthen'. Strategy and guidelines for achieving this are set out in the published Assessment, and these are drawn upon later in this Chapter, with regards to embedded landscape design mitigation.

7.3.16 Further LCAs outside of the Site boundary but within the Study Area are as follows:

LCA 097 – Gorhambury Estate

7.3.17 Located to the east of the M1 and notably disconnected from the landscape of the Site and the M1 corridor by mature woodland belts, as noted in the published assessment and shown in **Figure 7.1: Aerial Photograph** (inset below), this small LCA is noted for its views to the east and south, away from the Site. Further vegetation screening is noted for preventing views of the overhead cables which also run between the Site and this LCA.



Key:  Red Line Boundary	Project		Drawing Number		Client
	East Hemel		P21799-01-001-GIL-0641		
	Drawing Title		Drawing status	Revision	
	Figure 7.1 Aerial Photo		Drawn PM	Checked SL	
		Date 04.07.2025	Scale 1:15,000 @A3		

7.3.18 Due to this sense of separation and deliberate disconnection with the landscape to the west, this LCA is not considered to be pertinent to this assessment and is thus not considered further at this point.

LCA 095 – Revel End Plateau

7.3.19 This LCA is almost entirely within the study area and incorporates the south-eastern margins of the Chiltern NL. The LCA is described as gently undulating upland with a strong dividing margin formed by the M1. Land use is invariably arable and isolated pastures links to farmsteads.

7.3.20 The noted characteristics of LCA 095¹³ are as follows:

- *'arable farmland*
- *discrete woodlands and plantations*
- *urban fringe recreation*
- *M1 transport corridor*
- *urban fringe land uses including pasture*
- *isolated farmsteads*
- *field copses.'* (p.33)

7.3.21 The noted distinctive features relevant to the Site the overhead power lines and Great and Little Revel End Farms. There is no established community view published; however, the rumble of the motorway noise is noted. The landscape condition is recorded as being 'moderate', in conjunction with a 'moderate' strength of character, resulting in the recommendation to 'improve and conserve'. Strategy and guidelines for achieving this are set out in the published Assessment, however, due to the lack of interconnectivity with the Site, these are not used further reference.

LCA 009 – Bedmond Plateau

7.3.22 The northernmost extents of this LCA in closest proximity to the Site is described as being mostly gently undulating pasture; being visually contained and contains the following key characteristics of relevance to this part of the LCA¹⁴:

- *'gently undulating plateau with considerable pastoral and equestrian land*
- *narrow straight lanes to the west running parallel but not connecting...*
- *discrete woodlands throughout the area including both ancient woodland [including Blackwater Wood] and plantations*
- *coherent settled pattern of farms*

¹³ <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/environment-and-planning/landscape/landscape-character-assessments/area095.pdf>

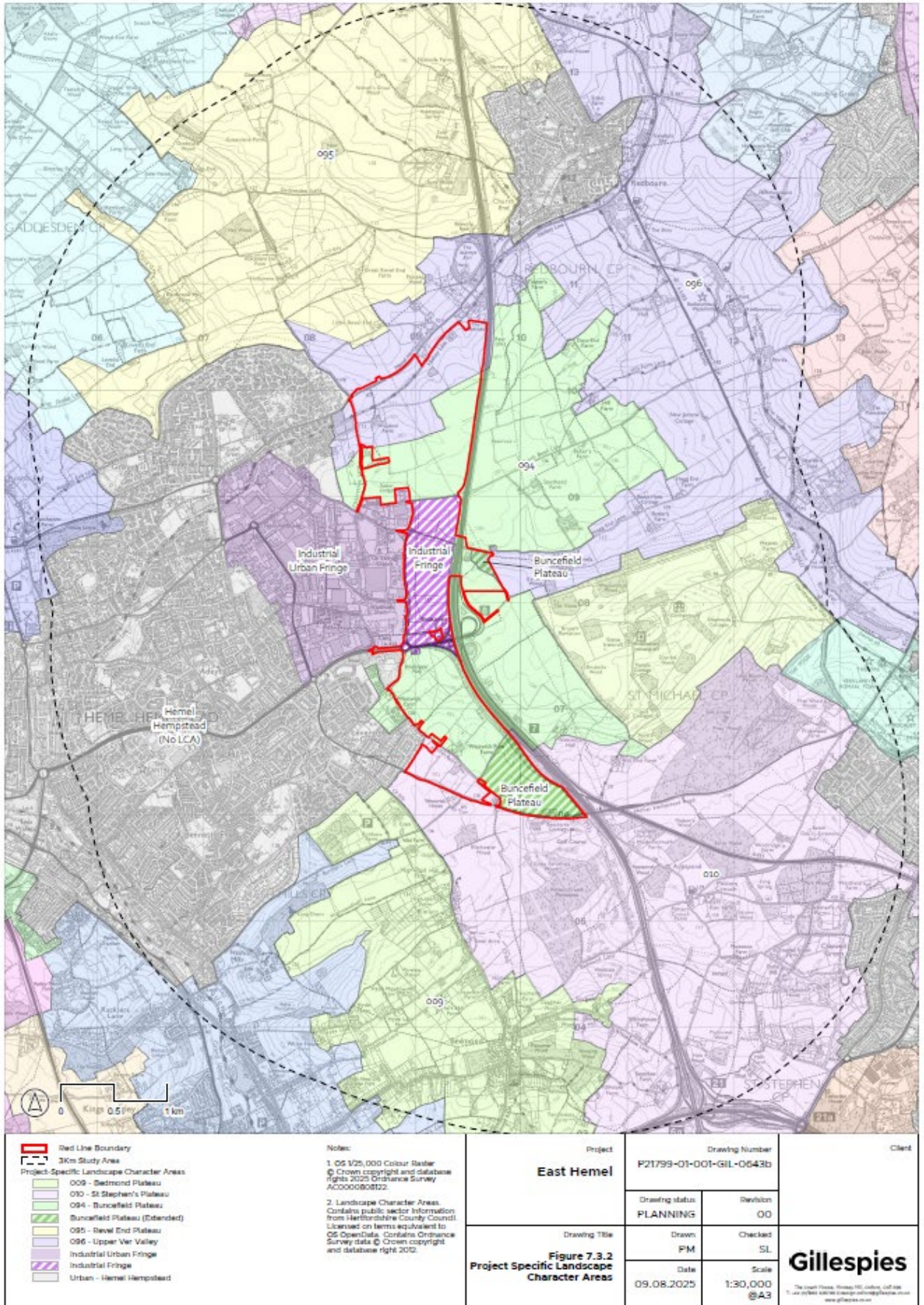
¹⁴ <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/environment-and-planning/landscape/landscape-character-assessments/area009.pdf>

- *small parkland areas in educational and institutional use...* (p.21)

7.3.23 The noted distinctive features cited in the LCA profile are all situated a considerable distance from the Site and refer to specific locations, therefore would not be influenced by any development of this nature on the Site. The community views which are published also notes features notably separated from the site, and therefore not relevant to this assessment. The landscape condition is recorded as being 'moderate', in conjunction with a 'moderate' robustness, resulting in the recommendation to 'improve and conserve'. Strategy and guidelines for achieving this are set out in the published Assessment, however, due to the lack of interconnectivity with the Site, these are not used further reference.

Project Specific Landscape Character Areas

7.3.24 In order to re-confirm the published landscape assessments above and provide project specific additional information for this LVIA, a detailed review of the existing landscape character has been undertaken. The project specific landscape character areas identified principally correspond to the LCAs in the Hertfordshire District and Borough Landscape Character Assessment, with some minor additional layers noted, as follows and as shown in **Figure 7.3.2** (inset below):



Project Character Area – Industrial Fringe

7.3.25 The central area (also referred to as H3 per the St. Alban's Local Plan Sites, Broad Locations; Landscape and Visual Appraisal, published September 2023¹⁵) of the Site, exhibits several differences in landscape character than the land to the north and south; this strip is relatively narrower than other areas in the LCA, ranging from 450-550m in width, as such, the sense of separation and level of tranquillity from the Industrial Park to the west, the dual carriageways to the south, and M1 motorway to the east, is much less than from the neighbouring landscapes. The elevated situation of the Industrial units to the west also form a stronger imposing presence in the skyline in this area than elsewhere. The field pattern is formed mostly of one single, very large field, with almost all historic patterns of field boundary hedgerows removed. Therefore, it is considered that this area is notably separate in character from the landscape to the north and south.

Project Character Area – extended LCA 094 Buncefield Plateau

7.3.26 Following further review of the southernmost two fields of the Site, including fieldwork research, it is not considered that this small area exhibits characteristics different from the adjacent area to the north. The presence of the M1 motorway is still a notable factor in tranquillity levels, the topography affords long views, there are discontinuous field patterns, and there are isolated properties; all of which are noted as key characteristics for LCA 094. When moving through the landscape within the Site boundary, the transition from LCA 094 to LCA 010 is not considered to be perceptible. Therefore, for the purpose of this LVIA this southern area is considered within LCA 094.

7.3.27 The small area of land within the Site boundary which lies to the east of the M1 motorway is formed of an attenuation basin / pond, a small paddock and one section of a small arable field. These features are all well enclosed from the surrounding landscape by native hedgerows with the former two features also framed by mature trees, creating a strong sense of separation between this pocket of ground and the highway networks to the west and north respectively. For the purpose of this LVIA, this area is considered to exhibit the landscape characteristics of LCA 094 across its limited extents.

Project Character Area – Urban: Hemel Hempstead

7.3.28 This LVIA will also consider the potential impacts upon the Hemel Hempstead's Urban Character. Hemel Hempstead New Town was developed from the original Old Market Town through the Masterplan of Geoffery Jellicoe in the 1940s and 50s¹⁶. Through these plans the industrial area to the east of the town was introduced and was expanded in the later phases. The construction of the M1 motorway link road in 1960 enabled the industrial area to grow further. Due to its proximity to London, Hemel Hempstead has historically provided homes for relocated Londoners, building homes for this purpose continued in the 1970s. In relation to the Site, the neighbourhoods of Woodhall Farm to the north-west, and Leverstock Green to the south-west, are the only areas

¹⁵https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/Planning%20Policy/R19/Landscape%20Visual%20Impact%20Appraisals%20-%20Broad%20Locations%20-%20SADC%20Local%20Plan%20Sites_Sept%202024.pdf

¹⁶ Hemel Hempstead New Town; Historic Context Study, Hemel Garden Communities, by CBA, May 2023

with interconnection to the Development, with other neighbourhoods notably separated by the Industrial Estate. The boundary of Woodhall Farm is physically and visually well separated from the Site itself and therefore is not assessed further; however, Leverstock Green shares some boundary between the residential neighbourhood and the Site. Leverstock Green comprises mainly post-war residential developments, with occasional scattered older properties, and pocket infill development of 21st century schemes, primarily semi or detached dwellings of two storeys. Building facades are generally red/clay coloured brick, white some white render, and occasionally (black) timber cladding reflective of the agricultural buildings found in the wider surroundings. Rooftops are generally clay / red or grey. The more contemporary developments with blocks of single colour rooftops invariably stand out within the more subdued and weathered materials of older buildings. The Garden City principles of 'a town in a park' with green infrastructure and green spaces forming a key part of any development remain clearly evident in this neighbourhood.

Project Character Area – Industrial Urban Fringe: Hemel Hempstead Industrial Estate

7.3.29 This extensive area covers the industrial developments of Buncefield Employment Area (Buncefield oil storage depot / Buncefield Terminal), Maylands Industrial Estate, the National Highways depot, the Prologis Park, and Breakspear Park. Consisting of large-scale warehouse units, vast swathes of parking and open concrete or tarmac expanses, as well as generating notable levels of heavy goods vehicle (HGV) movements, the scale of the built form contrasts to the residential character of the adjacent town. Despite the proximity to open arable farmland, levels of tranquillity are low, dust, rubbish and noise also feature in the experience of the place, which is mostly experienced from a moving vehicle. The architecture spans much of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, with many new units still under construction at the time of writing; the scale of the units generally increasing with modernity, including the vast Amazon Depot off Green Lane and the older Gist International Storage Facility off Swallowdale Lane. Buildings are invariably lacking in features including windows and grey in colour. Security fencing is dominant along the majority of highways forming imposing physical barriers and a strong sense of enclosure. The easternmost area contains the multiple Buncefield oil storage cylinders creating a slight reduction in scale, but equally industrial sense of character.

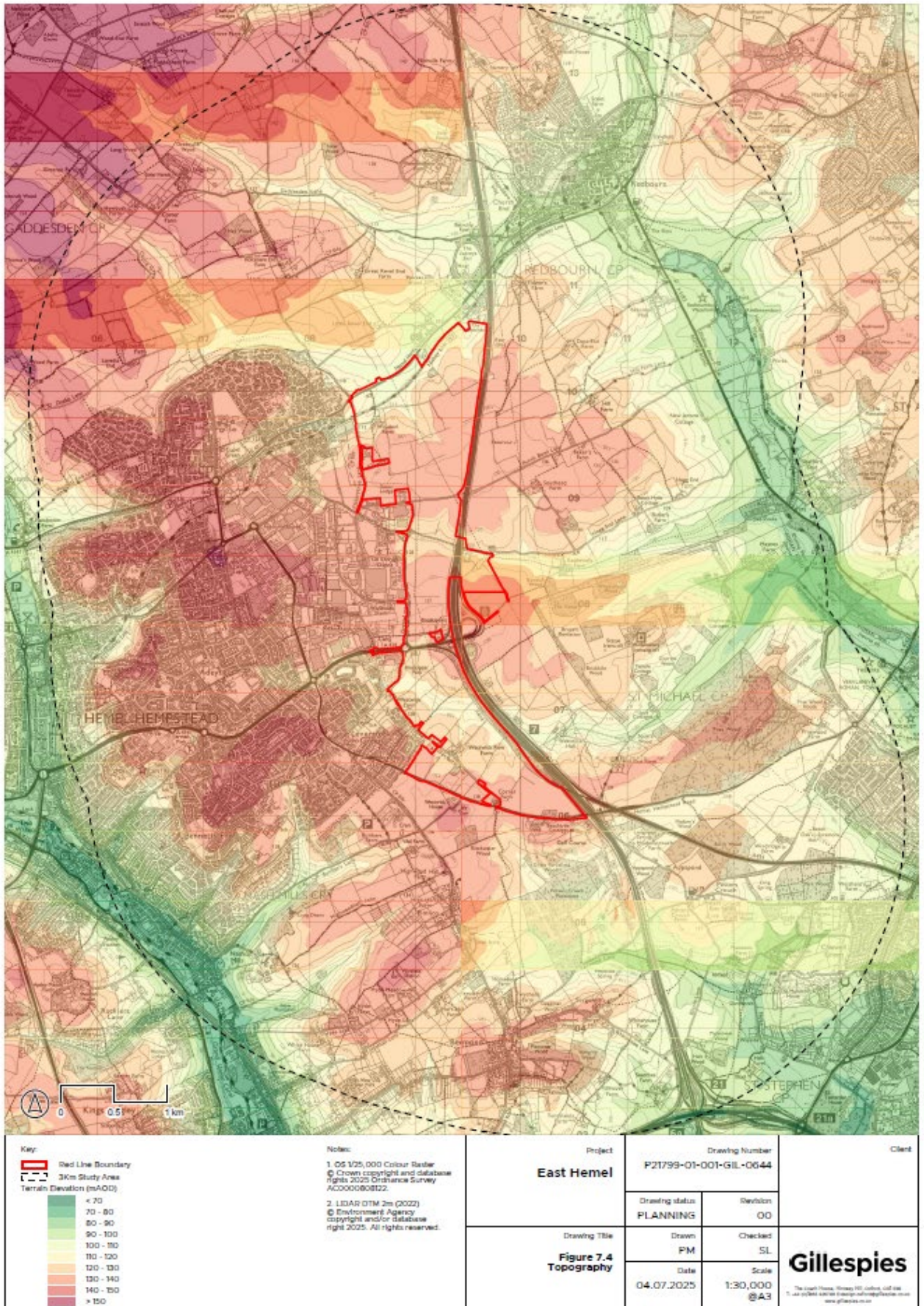
Landscape Designations

- 7.3.30 There are several statutory environmental designations applicable to the Site and Study Area – refer to **Figure 7.2** (see inset above) for more information.
- 7.3.31 The Site is dissected by two Public Rights of Way (PRoW), FP013, FP044 runs a short distance in the northern area (H2) of the Site, in the north-western corner between Redbourn Road, and Cherry Tree Farm, the footpath runs along an unsealed farm track and dissects through an arable field (access currently blocked) towards the southern end.
- 7.3.32 The PRoW FP13 passes through the Prologis Park (Industrial Estate) into the western edge of the Central site (H3) along the existing access road for the Department for Transport depot (registered as the Breakspear Motorway Maintenance Compound). This industrialised route then winds around to pass under the motorway and around the approach / exit lanes before connecting with the open countryside outside the Site boundary.

- 7.3.33 The final PRoW to pass through the Site is FP005 which is located in the southern area (H4) and connects to Westwick Row alongside a hedgerow field boundary, with the footpath along the motorway. The route then turns into an undesignated footpath as it exits the Site, and winds alongside the motorway to the road junction (Junction 8).
- 7.3.34 The Nickey Line is a Permissive Path and forms part of the National Cycle Network (NCN), which runs east-west across the northern area (H2) of the Site and is set in a mostly sunken track of a dismantled rail line. The path is flanked by dense vegetation and is very enclosed, save for various track crossings dissecting the line with field gates affording views and access to the farmland in a northerly and southerly direction. The Nickey Line is not a PRoW and thus is non-statutory, albeit locally highly valued.
- 7.3.35 The Site is located 2km from the Chilterns NL. This designation covers 838 km² of countryside stretching across Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire and Oxfordshire comprising mostly working arable farmland. The chalk geology results in steep chalk escarpment and hillsides. Villages are invariably located in valleys; there are many ancient routes and historic hillforts. The NL is also renowned for the chalk figures marked onto the hillsides. The area of the NL within the Study Area is located on relatively elevated ground in relation to the rest of the landscape, this higher topography leads to a lack of interconnectivity with the Site whilst far reaching longer distant views and appreciation of the landscape are afforded from this extent of the NL margins. The Site is notably distant and separate from the wider NL in terms of interconnectivity and perceptible visibility. The St Albans Local Plan Site, Broad Locations Landscape and Visual Appraisal, September 2023) specifically states '*Intervisibility with the Chilterns National Landscape - N/A*' with regards to all three parcels (H2, H3 and H4) of the Site. It is therefore noted that this assessment does not explore potential impacts on the NL and it's setting specifically.
- 7.3.36 The Site has been allocated within the St Albans Local Plan 2041 (the submission plan) as part of the Hemel Garden Communities (HGC) project. The Site is identified as three sites, H2 East Hemel Hempstead (North), H3 East Hemel Hempstead (Central) and H4 East Hemel Hempstead (South), which are used as reference to the area of the Site being assessed throughout this Chapter.

Site Character Overview

- 7.3.37 The Site topography is generally gently undulating and mid-lying within the surroundings, River Ver Valley which drains to the east, flowing in a south-easterly direction. Refer to **Figure 7.4: Topography** (inset below).



7.3.38 Levels on the Site undulate gently up and down across the Site in three east to west ridges, with the northern area’s lowest level at approximately 105m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) at the central northern boundary, rising to

approximately 136m AOD further south from that, and rolling down to a lower level of approximately 120m AOD in the south-eastern corner with Hogg End Lane. Within the central parcel of the Site, there is a similar formation to the topography with a raised east to west ridge, with the highest point at approximately 137m AOD, and falling down again to the south of this to approximately 127m AOD. The southern area of the Site falls in the central east-west axis to approximately 112m AOD then rises along the southernmost Site boundary to just over 138m AOD in a third ridge. The motorway embankment forms a notable earthwork bund in the southernmost parcel along the eastern boundary. The notable higher ground is to the north-west within the NL at >150m AOD at the furthest extent of the Study Area; and pockets of higher ground within Hemel Hempstead to the west at levels of 145-150m AOD, and similarly the high point at the Wireless Station off Hyde Lane.

- 7.3.39 The Site comprises mainly pastoral or arable farmland with a mixture of small, medium and large fields bordered by hedgerows with hedgerow trees, refer to **Figure 7.5** Constraints and aerial photography in **Figure-set 7.6.1-3** (see below). The field pattern varies across the Site with land to the north of the A414 comprising large scale pattern of largely arable fields due to historic field amalgamation and associated loss of boundary hedgerows and trees, whereas land in the southern parcel, comprising medium scale field patterns and a greater prevalence of equestrian land use. Throughout the Site the field boundary hedgerows are generally well established and contain scatterings of mature / semi-mature trees. Pockets of woodland belts and a few scattered woodland copses are also located in the northern area of the Site, some clustered around farmsteads. Alongside the majority of field boundaries where they are parallel with, often sunken, highways, the treed hedgerows are also invariably well established and mature, similarly the mature boundary planting on either side of the sunken Nickey Line forms a strong linear green infrastructure feature. There are very few scattered trees within the fields themselves, as is characteristic of the immediate surroundings, with scattered trees mostly limited to within the historic grounds of Gorhambury House, remnant of Arboretum planting, and the woodland pockets also found there, framed by the dense woodland belts around the perimeter. The embankment alongside the M1 motorway is also heavily planted forming an almost complete visual barrier to this highly prominent feature. Directly to the south of the Site is the Centurion Golf Club with associated mature green tree and vegetation planting, as would be standard for this land use.
- 7.3.40 The Site lies completely within the London Metropolitan Green Belt which stretches around both Hemel Hempstead to the west and Redbourn to the north-east but does not apply to them directly. The SADC Draft Local Plan to 2041 includes a review of the Green Belt boundary which would almost entirely exclude the extent of proposed built development from being within Green Belt. Should this designation boundary be altered the Green Belt protection would apply to the area of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and the site of the proposed secondary school only.
- 7.3.41 The nearest Conservation Area is located >900m to the north-east and is therefore located beyond the M1 corridor. The second nearest is >1.2km south-east at Potter's Crouch. There are further Conservation Areas >2.5km to the east at Shafford Mill Conservation Area and St Albans Conservation Area. All of these are located beyond the M1 corridor, and therefore notably separated from the Site by that landmark infrastructure feature. It is therefore not considered that these could be impacted in any way by the Development.



Drone Photo V6A1016



Drone Photo V6A1018

<p>Notes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Drone Site Photos provided by David Luck Associates. 2. Photos were taken on 3rd July 2024. 	<p>Project</p> <p>East Hemel</p>	<p>Drawing Number</p> <p>F21799-01-001-GIL-0646s</p>		<p>Client</p>
		<p>Drawing status</p> <p>PLANNING</p>	<p>Revision</p> <p>01</p>	
	<p>Drawing Title</p> <p>Figure 7.6.1 Drone Site Photography Sheet 1 of 3</p>	<p>Drawn</p> <p>PM</p>	<p>Checked</p> <p>SL</p>	<p>Gillespies</p> <p><small>The Crown Estate, 100, Victoria Street, London, EC4A 3DF, UK T: +44 (0)20 7553 5000 or 0800 047 047 www.gillespies.co.uk</small></p>
		<p>Date</p> <p>21.08.2025</p>	<p>Scale</p> <p>N/A</p>	



Drone Photo V6A1024



Drone Photo V6A1028

<p>Notes:</p> <p>1. Drone Site Photos provided by David Lock Associates.</p> <p>2. Photos were taken on 3rd July 2024.</p>	<p>Project</p> <p>East Hemel</p>	<p>Drawing Number</p> <p>P21799-01-001-GIL-0646b</p>		<p>Client</p>
		<p>Drawing status</p> <p>PLANNING</p>	<p>Revision</p> <p>01</p>	
	<p>Drawing Title</p> <p>Figure 7.6.2 Drone Site Photography Sheet 2 of 3</p>	<p>Drawn</p> <p>PM</p>	<p>Checked</p> <p>SL</p>	<p>Gillespies</p> <p><small>The Crown Estate, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, SG9 0ND T: +44 (0)1462 444444 E: enquiries@the-crown-estate.co.uk www.gillespies.co.uk</small></p>
		<p>Date</p> <p>21.08.2025</p>	<p>Scale</p> <p>N/A</p>	



Drone Photo V6A1039



Drone Photo V6A1046

<p>Notes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Drone Site Photos provided by David Lock Associates. 2. Photos were taken on 3rd July 2024. 	<p>Project</p> <p>East Hemel</p>	<p>Drawing Number</p> <p>F21799-01-001-GIL-0646c</p>	<p>Client</p>
	<p>Drawing status</p> <p>PLANNING</p>	<p>Revision</p> <p>01</p>	<p>Gillespies</p> <p><small>The Crown Estate, Strategy Hill, London, SE18 6LQ T: +44 (0)20 7546 4000 Fax: +44 (0)20 7546 4001 www.gillespies.co.uk</small></p>
	<p>Drawn</p> <p>PM</p>	<p>Checked</p> <p>SL</p>	
	<p>Date</p> <p>21.08.2025</p>	<p>Scale</p> <p>N/A</p>	

7.3.42 Although the Site is adjacent to the edge of the Hemel Hempstead Industrial Estate and the western edge of the M1 motorway, which introduces regular consistent noise and some degree of visual disturbance, and reduces the

tranquillity of the area, the majority of the Site has a rural character and quality, with some nuance in specific areas.

Visual Amenity of the Study Area

- 7.3.43 The Site is set within the mid-level and gently undulating land on the western valley of the Ver river, which lies to the east of Hemel Hempstead. The eastern area of the town itself is set on the higher ground between that and the parallel valley of the River Gade which runs through the town centre. The higher ground to the north-west designated as the Chilterns NL is formed of open farmland and treed hedges and forms the horizon to the northern areas of the Study Area.
- 7.3.44 The eastern edge of Hemel Hempstead comprises the large Hemel Hempstead Industrial Estate; this forms the visual backdrop to the Site when facing west – in the direction of the town, which is almost entirely obscured by the scale of the industrial buildings and infrastructure.
- 7.3.45 The boundaries of the Site are marked by mature hedgerows and scattered trees, with pockets of woodland within and around the wider landscape. For the majority of cases, adjacent highways around the Site are glimpsed through brief gaps in the hedgerows. Residential areas are also generally well screened from the main road network by mature planted trees and hedges. Conversely, views in from the highways are invariably brief glimpses in to gently undulating pastures, with limited long-distance views into the Site.
- 7.3.46 Views out to the east from within the Site in general are also limited by the motorway embankment and the dense, well established, tree planting along it.
- 7.3.47 In the northern area of the Site the Nickey line cycleway and permissive footpath – dismantled railway line – is flanked by mature trees and hedgerow, forming a strong visual barrier along this east-west axis, and limiting views to the north (to the NL). The narrow area of the Site north of the Nickey Line gains views towards the direction of the NL, but these are similarly obscured by the hedgerows on the undulating fields towards Holtsmore End and Little Revel End. Views of the highway are also relatively limited by the boundary hedgerow and trees. Views to the west are framed by the boundary hedgerows and trees along Cherry Tree Lane, with limited glimpses beyond this to the new residential development at Beaumont Manor. There are also foreshortened views to the west interrupted by the treed and hedgerow boundaries of the scattered farmsteads and dwellings, protruding into the Site.
- 7.3.48 Throughout the northern area of the Site, the large series of pylons runs diagonally north south-east and present a significantly detracting feature to the visual amenity. These overhead lines and supporting towers detract from the longer distant views of the rising land in the further distance and have a strong negative effect on the overall quality of the views.
- 7.3.49 Views from the central area (H3) are framed by the treed embankment of the M1 motorway and junction to the east and south-east. To the south, the area is enclosed physically and visually by the approach road to Junction 8, the A414, the boundary is formed of medium height hedgerows, and the layers of hedgerow along the access road

to the transport depot and field boundaries. Taller traffic (lorries, coaches etc) is clearly visible from within the Site also. Native hedgerow and tree planting along the boundaries of Hogg End Lane and Punchbowl Lane form visual barriers to the northern edge of this area of the Site and are both slightly sunken in nature. Vegetation along these roads is very dense with almost no gap to view in or out of the site. Two parallel series of overhead wires and smaller pylons run north-south across this central area which are also a strong detracting features in the visual amenity of this area.

- 7.3.50 To the west the skyline is dominated by the large industrial units and cylinders along Green Lane. Green Lane is flanked by hedge and tree planting, with the older industrial area in the north, generally having more mature boundary belts of vegetative screening than the newer units to the south. The boundary planting to the Site is invariably lower and therefore do not form a solid visual screen with the exception of the stretch alongside the Green Lane – Boundary Way roundabout junction, which is well treed. Views into the Site from Green Lane are open and relatively unrestricted. The vehicular movement on this road, which comprises a large proportion of large industrial vehicles, is therefore also a notable visual detractor.
- 7.3.51 The southern area (H4) of the Site gains similar views to the east of the heavily planted M1 motorway embankment, views of the speed gantries and taller vehicular traffic are occasionally visible. The southern and western boundaries of this part of the site are a variety of planted hedgerows and trees, mainly native in species mix. For the majority they are tall, dense and well established with occasional glimpses through field gates. In some locations the hedgerow thins and / or is trimmed lower to allow views between the highway and the arable fields, such as localised pockets on the southern extent of the A4147, however, for the majority there is limited visibility of the highway and dwellings beyond the Site boundary. To the north, the busy A414 Breakspear Way forms a barrier between the more northern ground, and the view comprises more dense overgrown hedgerow vegetation with very few trees. Taller vehicles are still clearly visible passing along the highway, and the hedgerows on the higher ground of the central area also is just visible in the horizon.
- 7.3.52 To illustrate the nature and extent of the potential visual effects arising from the Development on sensitive visual receptors, 29 publicly accessible viewpoint locations were selected. The viewpoint locations were selected, based on the combination of the visual envelope identified through the ZTVs and testing in the field and through consultation with SADC, DBC and Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) between August 2024 and end July 2025. The location and number of representative viewpoints is considered proportionate to the size of the Site and scale of the Development. The location of each representative viewpoint is shown on **Figure 7.7.1** (see inset above) alongside the ZTV for the Development, in addition a second ZTV has been produced showing only the visibility of the commercial area blocks and how the viewpoints are located in relation to potential views of that area of the Development only (**Figure 7.7.2** – see inset above).
- 7.3.53 Views of the Site are mainly experienced by receptors from residential properties, PRowS / bridleways, public open spaces or the nearby road network. The receptors experiencing these views who are identified as potentially sensitive to the Development are listed in **Table 7.3** together with the applicable representative viewpoints. A full description of the baseline for each of the viewpoints is provided in **Appendix 7.3**.

Table 7.1: Summary of Sensitive Visual Receptors

Viewpoint (VP)	Receptor	Existing Views
8, 20	Residents and the wider community using roads and footpaths within the NL to the northwest	Existing views of the Site are typically partially or wholly obscured by the intervening vegetation or landform. Where there are more open views, the Site is very distant and mainly seen in the context of the built-up area of Hemel Hempstead, overhead cables and pylons, and the M1 motorway.
6, 7, 9, 24, 25, 26, 28	Residents and the wider community using roads and footpaths to the north	Existing views towards the Site are typically open across fields, medium to long distance views obscured or filtered by the intervening vegetation along the highway network and field boundaries. Views are seen in the context of the overhead cables and pylons, and the M1 motorway.
10, 21, 22	Residents and the wider community using roads and footpaths to the northeast	Existing views towards the Site are typically partially or wholly obscured by the intervening vegetation or landform. Where there are more open views, the Site is distant and mainly seen in the context of the overhead cables and pylons, and the M1 motorway.
4, 5, 18, 19	Residents and the wider community using roads and footpaths to the west	Existing views towards the Site are typically partially or wholly obscured by the intervening vegetation or landform. Where there are more open views, the more distant areas of the Site are mainly seen in the context of the overhead cables and pylons. Several footpaths afford sequential views of the Site which are typically constrained to near and medium distance views due to the high tree and hedgerow cover both within the Site and around its boundaries.
14, 15, 16, 17	Residents and the wider community using roads and footpaths to the southwest	Existing views of the Site are typically experienced transiently and obliquely. Roadside hedgerows and the many mature trees filter some views into the Site whilst some long-distance views are afforded to the land further northeast of the M1 motorway.
1, 2, 3, 11, 12, 13, 23	Residents and the wider community using roads and footpaths to the east	Existing views of the Site are typically partially or wholly obscured by the intervening vegetation or landform. Where there are more open views, the Site is distant and mainly seen in the context of the built-up area of Hemel Hempstead, overhead cables and pylons, and the M1 motorway.
27	Cyclists and users of the Nickey Line Permissive Path within the Site	The permissive path and cycle route affords sequential views of the Site which are typically constrained to medium distance views due to the high tree and hedgerow cover both within the Site and along its boundaries. Existing views are typically experienced transiently and obliquely limited to gaps in the belts of vegetation either side of the track.
29	Pedestrians and drivers using A414 to the west of the Site	Existing views of the Site from this main road which connects the Industrial Estate to the M1 motorway and dissects the Site east to west, are typically experienced transiently and obliquely. These views are typically open across fields, long distance views obscured or filtered by the intervening vegetation along the highway network and field boundaries. Views are seen in the context of the overhead cables and pylons, and the M1 motorway and the Industrial Estate.

7.3.54 The enclosure and screening created by the built-up area to the east and south-east, together with the extent of intervening vegetation and landform, significantly limits intervisibility with the Site from the surrounding area.

7.3.55 The sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors is presented within Section 7.6 (Likely Effects of the Development and their Significance) of this Chapter.

7.3.56 Following the baseline work and initial appraisal of the Development, the following effects were not considered further within the assessment due to a perceived lack of potential impacts as set out below:

- Effects on views from the NL to the north-west due to distance, topography and intervening vegetation (VP 8 and 20), and as confirmed by the wireframes in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.4**.
- Effects on views from the Grounds at Gorhambury House to the east due to distance, topography and intervening vegetation (VP 12), and as confirmed by the wireframes in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.4**.
- Effects on views from Woodwells Cemetery to the west due to intervening industrial units and vegetation (VP 19), and as confirmed by the wireframes in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.4**.
- Effects on views from the BR002 bridleway to the east due to distance of >4km, topography and intervening vegetation (VP23), and as confirmed by the wireframes in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.4**.
- Effects on views from the Aubrey Fort to the north-east due to the topography and intervening vegetation (VP24), and as confirmed by the wireframes in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.4**.

7.4 Visual Characteristics of the Development and Embedded Mitigation

7.4.1 The Development design has evolved to respond to landscape character and visual issues drawn together during the production of this LVIA, as a result the following embedded mitigation measures have been incorporated into the Parameter Plans, Assessment Plans, Development Specification and other supporting documents.

7.4.2 The Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan sets out various measures which have been embedded in the design; strategic open space, SANG, retained woodlands, edge landscapes, habitat creation areas, planted noise bund, green corridors, habitat connectivity and Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) ponds.

7.4.3 The conversion of the highways Punchbowl Lane and Cherry Tree Lane to 'Quietways' in accordance with the Access and Movement Parameter Plan will also notably alter the value placed upon it by users and change the level of tranquillity experienced.

7.4.4 With regards to landscape and visual matters, additional detail in particular, of the 'edge landscape' features is set out in the Development Specification in order to ensure the required buffers around more sensitive neighbouring properties or rural areas / roads.

7.4.5 In accordance with the recommendations in the SADC Broad Locations Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (2024) the Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan supports maintaining a strategy gap and more sustainable settlement edge landscape in the form of structural planting and open space. Also, to introduce structural planting alongside the M1 corridor to mitigate noise and connect a vegetative line with the Nickey Line across the whole Site (H2, H3 and H4).

- 7.4.6 Noise mitigation has been incorporated into the Development in the form of an earth bund and acoustic fence in the northern and southern areas of residential development. It is anticipated through the 'edge landscape' annotation, that this be framed by belts of woodland planting in order to create a natural vegetated visual effect whilst enhancing the habitats and mitigating proposed residential communities from unwanted interruption from the M1 motorway.
- 7.4.7 The Buncefield Exclusion Zone proposals, alongside Green Lane, to plant a new woodland will visually screen the existing oil depot and unsightly Amazon depot from within the east. In addition, habitat creation east of the M1 motorway will further filter views across the motorway in the direction of the proposed commercial area.
- 7.4.8 Further measures to contribute to the character of the development include the introduction of community facilities such as natural and semi natural greenspaces, neighbourhood parks, local amenity green spaces, play areas, public squares, allotments and community food growing areas playing pitches and sports facilities and a sports hub. There is also proposed a network of non-vehicular access into and out of the open spaces and the development parcels, including the proposed cycle / pedestrian bridge across the A414 to avoid a sense of separation and ease access into the commercial area and the northern residential neighbourhood which comprises the secondary school, from the southern residential areas.
- 7.4.9 The Building Heights Assessment Plan has been developed in particular to be sympathetic to the surrounding land uses and character with lower maximum heights proposed in proximity to more rural lanes and in proximity to existing dwellings. Taller heights are proposed within the heart of the development parcels clustered around local centres, at key gateway locations, marking the principal entrances to the new residential neighbourhood from the north and south and in the vicinity of the existing industrial estate – re the maximum heights of the commercial area proposals.
- 7.4.10 Furthermore, the published landscape character assessments referenced in Section 7.4 above have been reflected upon to shape the proposals and incorporate appropriate mitigation measures within the design relevant to those locations across the Site, to ensure the landscape character compliments the aspirations for managing change, as set out below.
- 7.4.11 The Landscape Character Assessment for Dacorum (May 2004) puts forward strategies and guidelines for managing change. Set out below are the areas where the Development has been evolved to adhere strongly to these:

Embedded Mitigation in Relation to LCA 094 Buncefield Plateau

'STRATEGY AND GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING CHANGE: RESTORE CONDITION TO MAINTAIN CHARACTER

- *promote the creation of a network of new medium to large woodlands in the open arable landscape, particularly with a view to visually integrating the intrusive motorways and urban fringe development*
- *encourage the reversal of habitat fragmentation and the creation and improvement of habitat links to create ecocorridors*

- *ensure that landscape proposals for the context of roads and other developments fit the grain of the local landscape both horizontally and vertically; avoid significant impact on the local field pattern and use only locally native tree and shrub species for associated planting. It should not be axiomatic to enclose any new road with dense hedging on both sides – due reference should be made to local character and roads should be left open where appropriate*
- *promote a clear strategy for the visual and noise mitigation of all motorways, trunk roads and to positively integrate these corridors into the local landscape character*
- *ensure that ancient lanes and their associated hedgerows are retained, protected, enhanced and integrated into new development with due regard to their historic, ecological and landscape value.’¹⁷*

Embedded Mitigation in relation to LCA 010 St Stephen’s Plateau

‘STRATEGY AND GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING CHANGE: IMPROVE AND REINFORCE

- *promote the creation of a network of new woodlands in the open arable landscape, particularly with a view to visually integrating the intrusive motorways and existing urban fringe development. Develop a mix of medium to large woods near the motorways and urban areas (developing the existing pattern to the north) and also smaller copses linking with hedgerow restoration on the open arable areas, emphasising topographical variation*
- *promote hedgerow restoration and creation throughout the area to provide visual and ecological links between existing and proposed woodland areas. Pattern to follow historic field boundaries where possible*
- *broaden the range of recreational opportunities*
- *ensure all existing and proposed recreational land uses include appropriate measures to manage and enhance the existing landscape setting and historical and ecological value.’ (p.28)*

Embedded Mitigation in Relation to LCA 096 Upper Ver Valley

‘STRATEGY AND GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING CHANGE: CONSERVE AND STRENGTHEN

- *encourage the reversal of habitat fragmentation and the creation and improvement of habitat links to create ecocorridors*
- *promote a clear strategy for the visual and noise mitigation of motorways and trunk roads and positively integrate these corridors into the local landscape character*
- *encourage reversion from arable uses to pasture and grassland*
- *enhance and restore hedgerows and ditches as characteristic field boundary patterns*
- *encourage the retention and enhancement of rights of way and recreational routes*
- *ensure that new and restored buildings are in keeping with the local vernacular’ (p.40).*

7.4.12 Details of how these guidelines are already incorporated into the Development are set out through the Development Specification as well as in the Parameter Plans and Assessment Plan(s), but additionally have the

¹⁷ P.32, LCA 094, Dacorum Landscape Character Assessment.

potential to be further incorporated into the detailed design stage of the development proposals, and it is recommended that further reference to these LCA Strategies should be made as the scheme evolves beyond the outline application. The nature of an outline application inevitably requires mitigation measures to be refined, detailed and re-tested at the RMA stage, however the outline assessment does establish what form of mitigation could be of benefit and whether, in principle, such mitigation is achievable.

7.5 Likely Effects of the Development and their Significance

The Works

- 7.5.1 The demolition and construction stage will involve initial activities such as enabling works (including tree and hedge removal), and introduction of infrastructure as well as ongoing construction activities necessary to implement the Development. The Development will be phased over a number of years. In accordance with the indicative phasing strategy. During the phases of construction, the emerging buildings would be increasingly visible. Construction activities will be controlled by a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), this should include measures to reduce landscape and visual effects during construction e.g. controls on lighting and provision of hoardings.
- 7.5.2 Depending upon the nature of construction activities and the associated logistics for moving material and plant on and off Site, it is likely that construction features and activities would be visible from locations close to the Site, largely between and above the surrounding existing vegetation and buildings. There would also be middle to long distance views from a limited number of elevated locations. Views of the construction activities from most middle to long distance locations would be very limited or hardly perceptible, due to the influence of intervening topography and layering of mature vegetation.
- 7.5.3 Both initial and ongoing construction activities would generate a variety of vehicle movements in the local area. Off-Site movements are likely to include light and heavy haulage, commercial vehicles, and staff vehicles. On Site movements are likely to include haulage, general plant, forklifts, and mobile lifting equipment. Temporary signage, Site hoarding and marketing signage are likely to be erected and construction hazard warning lighting is likely to be visible. Whilst not exhaustive, the features and activities are likely to include:
- Site clearance and accommodation works (including removal of vegetation where required);
 - Movement and presence of associated construction vehicles and plant including cranes;
 - Presence of construction compounds and welfare facilities;
 - Presence of site hoarding / perimeter fencing;
 - Earthworks / groundworks and construction of internal utilities and road infrastructure and development platforms;
 - Presence of tree protection measures in accordance with BS5837:2012;
 - Temporary construction lighting; and

- Alterations to the existing road network for new vehicular access points across all areas of the Site.

The Completed and Operational Development

- 7.5.4 Impacts at the completed development stage are concerned with the long-term alteration to the baseline from rural farmland and scattered residences to the future scenario of suburban residential, educational and commercial developments. Once completed, the Development would be seen as a permanent part of the landscape.
- 7.5.5 The main change would be associated with the Site and the replacement of rural farmland and scattered dwellings to residential, commercial and educational development set within a strong landscape framework and connected by new highways improvements, in particular along Breakspear Way (A414). The topography of the Site would be largely retained other than localised modifications to accommodate building platforms within each area (H2, H3 and H4) and along the eastern residential boundary with the M1 motorway for noise attenuation. The Development seeks to protect, retain and enhance existing vegetation on the Site in line with the information set out in **ES Volume 2, Chapter 8: Ecology and Nature Conservation** and integrate it into an extensive framework of new green infrastructure as set out in Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan, improving the value and connectivity of vegetation and habitats on the Site.
- 7.5.6 The incorporation of various valuable ecological habitats would also be beneficial for enriching biodiversity, as set out in the Development Specification, which contributes to the degree of tranquillity within the landscape.
- 7.5.7 The new buildings would be situated within an existing landscape setting of mature hedgerow and hedgerow tree boundaries and an already strong presence of nearby built development from the existing industrial estates and existing residential developments. The design has evolved through consultation with Natural England to provide strategic 'Edge Landscapes' against valuable ecological areas and existing vegetation. These ecological buffers and edge landscapes serve to strengthen the green infrastructure links across the site and protect adjacent habitats. In addition, two areas have been identified for 'habitat creation areas with limited public access' at the Buncefield Exclusion Zone in the form of a planted woodland, and the land east of the M1 motorway including multi-value SuDS ponds. Furthermore, >75Ha of SANG will be delivered through a 'Country Park' across the northern parcel (H2) and a 'Valley Park' within the southern parcel (H4).
- 7.5.8 The Development would represent an extension to the residential edge of Hemel Hempstead and Industrial Estate but its influence on the wide landscape would be lessened due to the high level of containment of the Site from the high existing tree, woodland and hedgerow cover along its boundaries. New boundary vegetation, the creation of the SANG and new habitats as part of the biodiversity net gain (BNG) strategy which will be managed for eighty and thirty years respectively, would further assimilate the Development into the immediate and wider landscape.

7.6 Assessment of Landscape Effects

- 7.6.1 The assessment of landscape effects during demolition, construction and completed development are set out in **Appendix 7.3** and summarised in **Table 7.4** below and take account of the embedded mitigation described above.

It is assumed that the landscape proposals would be implemented as early as possible in the construction programme however, it is unlikely that this would be sufficiently established during the construction phase to contribute to the mitigation of impacts on landscape receptors. Therefore, the assessment of likely effects during construction assumes the worst-case scenario, without landscape mitigation.

7.6.2 The completed development effects are assessed at Year 1 following completion and Year 15 during operation of the Development. By Year 15, it is assumed that the landscape proposals would be sufficiently mature to contribute to the mitigation of impacts on landscape receptors.

Table 7.4: Summary of Landscape Assessment

LCA	Significance of Effect		
	The Works	The Completed and Operational Development (Year 1)	The Completed and Operational Development (Year 15)
LCA 094 – Buncefield Plateau (extended)	Major Adv (Sig.)	Major Adv (Sig.)	Moderate Adv (Sig.)
LCA H3 - Industrial Fringe	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)	Neutral
LCA 010 - St Stephen's Plateau	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)
LCA 096 – Upper Ver Valley	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)	Minor Ben (Not Sig.)
LCA Urban: Hemel Hempstead	Not considered further		
LCA Industrial Urban Fringe: Hemel Hempstead Industrial Estate	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)
LCA 009 – Bedmond Plateau	Not considered further		
LCA 095 – Revel End Plateau	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)

Adv – Adverse effects; Ben – Beneficial effects; Sig. – Significant; Not Sig. – Not Significant

7.7 Assessment of Visual Effects

7.7.1 The assessment of visual effects during demolition, construction and the completed development stage are set out in **Appendix 7.2** and summarised in **Table 7.5** and take account of the embedded mitigation described above. It is anticipated that the landscape proposals would be implemented as early as reasonably possible in the

construction programme however, it is unlikely that this would be sufficiently established during the demolition and construction stage to contribute to mitigation of impacts on visual receptors. Therefore, the assessment of likely effects during construction assumes the worst-case scenario, without landscape mitigation in place.

- 7.7.2 The completed development effects are assessed at Year 1 and Year 15 following completion of the Development. By Year 15, it is assumed that the landscape proposals would be sufficiently mature to contribute to mitigation of impacts on visual receptors.
- 7.7.3 Please note that the visual assessment uses the same approach as the landscape assessment. The methodology is set out in **Appendix 7.1**. Visual illustrative material and photographs are set out in **Appendix 7.4** and **Appendix 7.6**¹⁸ with methodology for the production of the visualisations set out in **Appendix 7.5**. For information on how the judgements of significance have been made including the sensitivity and predicted magnitude of impact for each of the viewpoints, please refer to **Appendix 7.2** as noted above.
- 7.7.4 Lighting design does not form part of the detail of this outline planning application therefore a conclusive impact assessment cannot be made in relation to potential impacts of the Development at night. Professional judgement has been made to ascertain whether there is the potential for an effect, and this is passed within the **Appendix 7.2** however this is not noted in the formal assessment summary below. Further assessment would be required following detailed design of the lighting scheme.

Table 7.5: Summary of Visual Assessment

Visual Receptor	Significance of Effect		
	The Works	The Completed and Operational Development (Year 1)	The Completed and Operational Development (Year 15)
Viewpoint 1: View from Hogg End Lane	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)	Negligible
Viewpoint 2: View from highway near Old Jeromes (residential)	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Moderate Adv (Sig.)
Viewpoints 3 and 4: View from Punchbowl Lane	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)
Viewpoint 5: View from residential dwellings on Cherry Tree Lane and Punchbowl Lane (West)	Major Adv (Sig.)	Major Adv (Sig.)	Moderate Adv (Sig.)
Viewpoints 6 and 26: View from highway on Redbourn Road / Hemel Hempstead Road	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)
Viewpoint 7: View from residential dwellings on and near Holtsmere End Lane	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoints 8 and 20: View from residential dwellings on and near Gaddesden Lane and within the National Landscape		Not considered further	

¹⁸ Appendix 7.6: Illustrative Detailed Chalk Massing is included for selective receptor views, for additional context only.

Visual Receptor	Significance of Effect		
	The Works	The Completed and Operational Development (Year 1)	The Completed and Operational Development (Year 15)
Viewpoint 9: View from PRoW near Flamsteadbury Farm	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)
Viewpoint 10: View from PRoW by Flowers Farm	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 11: View from PRoW near Baker's Farm	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)
Viewpoint 12: View from the grounds of Gorhambury House – Registered Park and Garden		Not considered further	
Viewpoint 13: View from PRoW near Brikklin Wood	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Moderate Adv (Sig.)
Viewpoints 14 and 17: View from highway on Hemel Hempstead Road A4147 (east and west)	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)
Viewpoint 15: View from PRoW by Bedmond Road	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 16: View from residential dwellings on Leverstock Green	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Negligible
Viewpoint 18NE and 18SE: Views from residential dwellings on Westwick Row facing north-east and south-east	Major Adv (Sig.)	Major Adv (Sig.)	Moderate Adv (Sig.)
Viewpoint 19: View from Woodwells Cemetery		Not considered further	
Viewpoint 21: View from residential dwellings on Mansdale Road and the Hertfordshire Way (Long Distance Path)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 22: View from PRoW east of Redbourn	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 23: View from PRoW near Batchwood Hall		Not considered further	
Viewpoint 24: View from Aubrey Fort		Not considered further	
Viewpoints 25 and 28: View from PRoWs FP009 and FP011 north of the Site	Major Adv (Sig.)	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Moderate Adv (Sig.)
Viewpoints 27N and 27S: Views from the Nickey Line (permissive path)	Moderate Adv (Sig.)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)	Neutral
Viewpoints 29: View from highway Breakspear Way (A414)	Major Adv (Sig.)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)	Minor Adv (Not Sig.)

Adv – Adverse effects; Ben – Beneficial effects; Sig. – Significant; Not Sig. – Not Significant

7.8 Additional Mitigation / Enhancement and Likely Residual Effects of the Development and their Significance

Additional Mitigation

7.8.1 There are no further measures proposed to mitigate the landscape or visual effects of the Development. The Parameter Plans, including the Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan, associated with the Development have been embedded within the design assessed. As such, the residual effects of the completed and operational Development remain as reported in the 'Assessment of Effects' section above. Separate to this is the matter of detailed design such as lighting, road junctions, building layout, design and treatment, which will be designed and assessed in more detail if required at Reserved Matters Application (RMA) stage.

The Works

7.8.2 As no additional mitigation has been embedded for the Outline Planning Application, the residual construction effects remain as reported in the assessment of effects section.

The Completed and Operational Development

7.8.3 As no additional mitigation has been embedded for the Outline Planning Application, the residual effects remain as reported in the assessment of effects section.

Enhancement Measures

7.8.4 No further enhancement measures are proposed in respect of the Development.

Summary of Residual Effects

7.8.5 **Table 7.6** provides a tabulated summary of the outcomes of the landscape and visual assessment of the Development. The residual effect shown in the table is the predicted Year 15 effect when the landscape proposals have had chance to mature and help integrate the Development into their surroundings. Only effects which are considered Significant are given consideration.

Table 7.6: Summary of Residual Landscape and Visual Effects

Receptor	Description of Residual Effect	Additional Mitigation	Scale and Significance of Residual Effect	Nature of Residual Effect				St Mt Lt
				+	D	P	R	
The Completed and Operational Development at Year 15								

Receptor	Description of Residual Effect	Additional Mitigation	Scale and Significance of Residual Effect	Nature of Residual Effect				
				+	D	P	R	St
				-	I	T	IR	Lt
LCA 094 - Buncefield Plateau (extended)	There would be direct and indirect effects on the landscape within this LCA resulting from the Development through the loss of openness, tranquillity, farmland, trees and hedgerows. This is coupled with the enhancements to the green infrastructure, including new woodlands and SANG, as well as the extensive edge landscape planting and provision of increased community access and facilities.	None required	Moderate Adv (Sig.) This LCA comprises the majority of the Development site and inevitable significant adverse effects are therefore anticipated.	-	D	P	IR	Lt
Viewpoint 2: View from highway near Old Jeromes (residential)	Open views across the wider landscape in relatively close proximity (600m) to the Site where views would be substantially changed, in particular by the commercial development in the central area (H3), and across a wide extent of the view forming a new horizon to the skyline. Due to the scale and topography there is no further reduction that can be achieved by additional mitigation at this outline stage. It is noted that this receptor group encompasses a very small number of people.	None required	Moderate Adv (Sig.) The careful selection of building form, massing and materials will ensure this effect is minimised. Further assessment could be undertaken to clarify opportunities for a reduction in effect at detailed design stage.	-	I	P	IR	Lt
Viewpoint 5: View from residential dwellings on Cherry Tree Lane and Punchbowl Lane (West)	Open views across the open landscape in the foreground to the Site where views would be entirely changed in relation to residential development in the northern area (H2) and across the full extent of their view in min. 2 orientations. Edge landscape forms embedded mitigation filtering views into residential parcels. It is noted that this receptor group encompasses a very small number of people.	None required	Moderate Adv (Sig.) The careful selection of building form, massing and materials will ensure this effect is minimised. Further assessment could be undertaken to clarify opportunities for a reduction in effect at detailed design stage.	-	D	P	IR	Lt
Viewpoint 13: View from PRow near Brikklin Wood	Open views across the wider landscape in relatively mid-proximity (800m) to the Site where views would be substantially changed, in particular by the commercial development in the central area (H3), and across a wide extent of the view forming a new horizon to the	None required	Moderate Adv (Sig.) The careful selection of building form, massing and materials will ensure this effect is minimised. Further assessment could be undertaken to clarify opportunities for a	-	I	P	IR	Lt

Receptor	Description of Residual Effect	Additional Mitigation	Scale and Significance of Residual Effect	Nature of Residual Effect				St Mt Lt
				+	D	P	R	
	skyline. Due to the scale and topography there is no further reduction that can be achieved by additional mitigation at this outline stage.		reduction in effect at detailed design stage.	-	I	T	IR	
Viewpoint 18NE and 18SE: Views from residential dwellings on Westwick Row facing north-east and south-east	Open views across the landscape in the foreground to the Site where views would be entirely changed in relation to residential development in the southern area (H4) and across the full extent of their view in min. 2 orientations. Edge landscapes forms embedded mitigation filtering views into residential parcels. It is noted that this receptor group encompasses a very small number of people.	None required	Moderate Adv (Sig.) The careful selection of building form, massing and materials will ensure this effect is minimised. Further assessment could be undertaken to clarify opportunities for a reduction in effect at detailed design stage.	-	D	P	IR	Lt
Viewpoints 25 and 28: View from PRoWs FP009 and FP011 north of the Site	Open views across the arable landscape in the foreground to the Site beyond where views would be sporadically altered as a result of residential development in the northern area (H2). The change would extend across a wide expanse of the panorama but be broken up by existing tree planting, additionally the 'Edge Landscape' planting will form further effective mitigation filtering views into the residential parcels and breaking up the overall effect.	None required	Moderate Adv (Sig.) The careful selection of building form, massing and materials will ensure this effect is minimised. Further assessment could be undertaken to clarify opportunities for a reduction in effect at detailed design stage.	-	I	P	IR	Lt

Notes:

* - = Adverse / + = Beneficial / + / - Neutral; D = Direct / I = Indirect; P = Permanent / T = Temporary; R = Reversible / IR = Irreversible; St - Short term / Mt - Medium term / Lt - Long term.

** Negligible / Minor / Moderate / Major

7.9 Likely Residual Cumulative Effects and their Significance

7.4.13 The purpose of the Cumulative Effects Assessment (CEA) is to identify whether effects from several developments, which individually might be insignificant, could cumulatively result in a significant effect upon landscape and / or visual receptors.

- 7.9.1 The assessment considered all other schemes that have potential to give rise to significant cumulative landscape or visual effects when seen alongside the Development. It excludes existing developments, as these were accounted for in the baseline conditions which were established as part of the main LVIA. It also excludes receptors who have been 'not considered further' or assessed as experiencing a potential Negligible or Neutral effect as a result of the Development in isolation.
- 7.9.2 The list of Cumulative Schemes for inclusion within the CEA is set out below and has been identified by Avison Young and agreed with SADC and DBC for consideration as described in **ES Volume 2, Chapter 2: EIA Methodology**. Only those developments that are of a sufficient scale to be of influence on the landscape or views (i.e. greater than 100 houses, or a commercial / industrial scheme with equivalent massing), and lie within the <3km Study Area are included.
- 7.9.3 The cumulative effects from each of the viewpoints are included in **Appendix 7.2. Table 7.8** provides a summary of the likely cumulative effects resulting from the Development and the Cumulative Schemes.

Table 7.8: Summary of Cumulative Effects

Scheme No.	Cumulative Scheme Planning Reference and Address	Cumulative Effects Likely?	The Works	The Completed and Operational Development (Year 15)	
			Reason	Cumulative Effects Likely?	Reason
Approved Developments					
1	DBC: 21/03793/MOA Land At Green Lane, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire	No	Construction appears almost complete. The development already present and considered within the baseline conditions.	No	This development is almost complete and therefore the development is already present and considered within the baseline conditions.
2a	4/02539/16/MOA SADC: 5/2016/2845 Land Between Three Cherry Trees Lane And Cherry Tree Lane, Hemel Hempstead	No	Construction appears almost complete. The development already present and considered within the baseline conditions.	No	This development is almost complete and therefore the development is already present and considered within the baseline conditions.
3	DBC: 22/03812/MFA	No	No intervisibility or interconnectivity between developments	No	No intervisibility for visual receptors or interconnectivity

Scheme No.	Cumulative Scheme Planning Reference and Address	The Works		The Completed and Operational Development (Year 15)	
		Cumulative Effects Likely?	Reason	Cumulative Effects Likely?	Reason
	Land At Eastman Way, Atlas Copco, Hemel Hempstead Industrial Estate, Swallowdale Lane, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP2 7DU				for LCAs between developments
4	SADC: 5/2021/3194 St Stephens Green Farm, Chiswell Green Lane, St Albans, Hertfordshire	No	No intervisibility or interconnectivity between developments	No	No intervisibility between developments, albeit both schemes are located within LCA 010 St Stephen's Plateau the scale of development leads to no interconnectivity between developments.
Other Projects (Live Applications, Appeals and Allocations)					
This scheme is allocated alongside the East Hemel Sites (H2, H3 and H4) for the HGC Concept Framework Plan. Therefore, cumulative effects are intended, in order that the schemes be integrated.					
2b	SADC: 5/2024/0927 Land Between Three Cherry Trees Lane And Cherry Tree	Yes	Views will be afforded across both Construction phases in the direct foregrounds in opposing orientations. Visual receptor 05: Residents on Cherry Tree Lane, would experience an increase in adverse effect which is already assessed to be Major Adverse as a result of the Development in isolation. Increased disturbance, noise and activity in this concentrated area would lead to a localised additional reduction in tranquillity for the LCA 094 Buncefield Plateau which covers both sites. The LCA would experience an increase in adverse effect which is already assessed to be Major Adverse	No	Limited intervisibility between developments due to combined edge landscape treatments on both schemes. Existing assessment for Visual receptor 05 – residents on Cherry Tree Lane will remain consistent with cumulative effects. Interconnectivity with the LCA on these opposing sides of Cherry Tree Lane will also be notably separated by the physical barrier and buffering effect of the densely planted vegetation edges. In the wider context, the presence of residential dwellings across this expanse serves to reinforce the surrounding Urban LCA and forms a logical infill, being entirely in-keeping with the

Scheme No.	Cumulative Scheme Planning Reference and Address	The Works		The Completed and Operational Development (Year 15)	
		Cumulative Effects Likely?	Reason	Cumulative Effects Likely?	Reason
			as a result of the Development in isolation.		character of the neighbourhood.
12	SADC: 5/2021/3631 Land At Gaddesden Lane, Redbourn, Hertfordshire, AL3 7DP	No	Viewpoint 21: residents of Mansdale Road, would have existing views to the Site obscured by this scheme and thus be not considered further from the LVIA assessment. Therefore, no intervisibility for visual receptors or interconnectivity between the construction phase of this development.	No	Viewpoint 21: residents of Mansdale Road, not considered further. Both schemes are located within LCA095 Revel End Plateau but the scale of development and separation from the M1 motorway leads to no interconnectivity between developments.
13	DBC: 21/04556/MFA Plots 1 & 2, Maylands Avenue, Hemel Hempstead, HP2 4FQ	Yes	Intervisibility between the two schemes would lead to a construction works being visible in the view simultaneously, but these would be seen in the context of the industrial setting where construction works, noise, large vehicular movements etc are frequently viewed, and would not lead to a change in adverse impacts for users of Breakspear Way – Viewpoint 29, Major Adverse. The LCA: Industrial Urban Fringe would experience a combined interruption to the localised area in the form of traffic, noise, activities etc which would lead to an increase of adverse impact to Major Adverse (Significant) due to the scale and proximity of the additional scheme.	No	Some intervisibility between developments however both schemes would be in-keeping with the visual amenity of the view. Both developments are located within the extended industrial LCA and would be perceived in that context therefore would not lead to any incongruity to the new landscape character.
14	DBC: 19/02749/MOA Land At Marchmont Farm Piccotts End Lane, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP2 6JH	No	No intervisibility or interconnectivity between developments	No	No intervisibility for visual receptors or interconnectivity for LCAs between developments

Scheme No.	Cumulative Scheme Planning Reference and Address	The Works		The Completed and Operational Development (Year 15)	
		Cumulative Effects Likely?	Reason	Cumulative Effects Likely?	Reason
<p>This scheme (North Hemel) is allocated alongside the Site (East Hemel) for the HGC Concept Framework Plan. Therefore, cumulative effects are intended, in order that the schemes be integrated.</p>					
19	<p>SADC: 5/2025/0645 North Hemel Hempstead Development Site Hemel Hempstead Road Redbourn Hertfordshire</p>	Yes	<p>High intervisibility and interconnectivity between developments connecting visual receptors combined views and changes to LCAs. For the full visual assessment – refer to Appendix 7.2. Cumulative effects would be experienced for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Viewpoints 6 & 26 – Users of Redbourn Road – Maj Adv (Sig.) ➤ Viewpoint 7 – Residents near Holtsmere End Lane - Not considered further; ➤ Viewpoint 9 – Users of PRoW FP040 near Flamsteadbury Farm Maj Adv (Sig.) ➤ Viewpoints 25 & 28 - PRoWs FP009 and FP011 north of the Site – Not considered further ➤ Viewpoint 27 – Nickey Line (north) Major Adv (Sig.) <p>LCA 096 – Upper Ver Valley is located within both sites, combined effects during construction would be focussed on Redbourn Road and would be localised and contained to this extent of the wider LCA. No anticipated change to the assessment in isolation. LCA 095 – Revel End Plateau would experience an increased direct adverse effect due to the North Hemel development. However, it is anticipated that the latter development would lead to a Major adverse effect on the LCA in isolation of the East Hemel scheme, therefore</p>	Yes	<p>Cumulative effects would be experienced for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Viewpoints 6 & 26 – Users of Redbourn Road Mod Adv (Sig.) <p>LCA 096 – Upper Ver Valley would experience a cumulative effect with established green infrastructure features; SANG etc combined beneficial effect. No change to assessment in isolation. LCA 095 – Revel End Plateau would experience change bought about as a result of the North Hemel scheme in isolation of the East Hemel Development. Therefore, there is no cumulative impact due to the East Hemel Development.</p>

Scheme No.	Cumulative Scheme Planning Reference and Address	The Works		The Completed and Operational Development (Year 15)	
		Cumulative Effects Likely?	Reason	Cumulative Effects Likely?	Reason
			no cumulative impact due to East Hemel.		
20	SADC: 5/2025/0733 Proposed Solar Farm Potters Crouch Hertfordshire	No	No intervisibility or interconnectivity between developments	No	No intervisibility for visual receptors or interconnectivity for LCAs between developments

* DBC = Dacorum Borough Council; SADC = St Albans City & District Council

The Works

- 7.9.4 Three Cumulative Schemes have been identified which would result in cumulative landscape and visual effect on the receptors identified in this Chapter. Two of these, North Hemel (5/2025/0645) and Land off Cherry Tree Lane (5/2024/0927) are part of the HGC Concept Framework Plan and are therefore composed to integrate as part of the wider expansion of Hemel Hempstead. Cumulative and inter-related effects are both intentional and inevitable.
- 7.9.5 For North Hemel, three visual receptor groups would experience increased likely **Major Adverse (Significant)** effects as follows: Viewpoint 27 – Nickey Line (north): Viewpoints 6 & 26 – Users of Redbourn Road; and Viewpoint 9 – Users of PRoW FP040 near Flamsteadbury Farm. Effects for LCA 095 – Revel End Plateau as a result of the North Hemel scheme would supersede effects from the Development in isolation and thus exclude it from CEA.
- 7.9.6 The Land off Cherry Tree Lane would also lead to an increase in likely **Major Adverse (Significant)** effects for Viewpoint 5 – Residents on Cherry Tree Lane, and LCA 094 Buncefield Plateau.
- 7.9.7 The third Cumulative Scheme is that on Maylands Avenue (21/04556/MFA), where Viewpoint 29 – Users of Breakspear Way (A414), will experience an increase in adverse effect, however they are already assessed as major adverse in the assessment for the Development in isolation. Cumulative effects are also likely for LCA: Industrial Urban Fringe increasing to **Major Adverse (Significant)** where both construction works are undertaken simultaneously.

The Completed and Operational Development

- 7.9.8 There is only one Cumulative Scheme identified which would result in cumulative landscape and visual effect on the receptors identified in this Chapter. For North Hemel, one visual receptor group would experience increased likely **Major Adverse (Significant)** effects, Viewpoints 6 & 26 – Users of Redbourn Road. Effects for LCA 095 – Revel End Plateau as a result of the North Hemel scheme would supersede effects from the proposed East Hemel Development in isolation and thus exclude it from cumulative assessment.

7.10 Conclusions

7.10.1 This Chapter has detailed the potential landscape and visual effects due to the works (construction), completion and operational stages of the Development. The assessment of these three stages has been undertaken considering the relevant national and local guidance and regulations.

Effects during the Works

7.10.2 During the Works, there would be significant adverse effects on the landscape character within the Site. In many cases, these effects would be temporary, although there would be some longer term effects from construction activities such as vegetation removal. Due to the retention of many of the existing trees and hedgerows (which has been a key element of the Development), the effects on individual landscape elements within the Site would not be significant.

7.4.14 There would be significant adverse effects on the views experienced by receptors both within and close to the Site. This includes people living along Cherry Tree Lane, Westwick Row and Leverstock Green, which would be surrounded by activity over a long period of time, and which currently have open views across the Site, whether directly or obliquely, and the position is considered to be similar for the more distant cluster of residential receptors on the highway near Old Jeromes.

7.10.3 There would also be significant adverse effects for users of the PRoWs or permissive paths in the local vicinity, to the Site directly north and east, and where the Nickey Line dissects the Site. Similarly, these recreational users within the Green Belt would gain clear uninterrupted views of the Construction activity over a long period of time, and currently have open views across the Site, whether directly or obliquely.

7.10.4 Significant adverse effects were also assessed for users of the highway network where it dissects the Site, through Punchbowl Lane and Breakspear Way (A414), and where it is adjacent to the Site boundary along Redbourn Road (B487) and Hemel Hempstead Road (A4147), where receptors would be surrounded by activity over a long period of time as well as increased traffic and noise on this highway network itself. As construction progresses, the implementation of the 'Quietway' on Punchbowl Lane would notably alter the value that the receptor group using this route place upon their journey and notably change the level of tranquillity experienced.

7.4.15 There would not, however, be a significant effect on views from The Chilterns NL, the Registered Park and Garden at Gorhambury House, or the Aubrey Fort site, nor from private residences to the north and north-east.

7.4.16 Users of the PRoW network in proximity to the Site to the south and north-east also would not experience significant adverse effects, and similarly for PRoW users at a greater distance from the Site to the north-east or east. The vegetation being retained within the Site and along its boundaries will heavily filter views, with the majority of those receptors affected by construction being in close proximity.

7.10.5 Overall, it is considered that demolition and preparation of the existing Site and construction of the Development would result in some significant effects on the landscape and identified receptors, and as such would give rise to

significant effects on landscape and visual, however, the significant effects are relatively contained to the Site and immediate surroundings, and receptors in close proximity due to the relative level of containment provided by the landform and existing mature vegetation.

Effects during the Completed and Operational Development (Year 15)

- 7.10.6 During the completed and operational Development the assessment concludes there would be significant adverse effects on the landscape character within the Site, although due to the retention of many of the existing trees and hedgerows and the embedded landscape mitigation measures such as edge landscape enhancements and the creation of green corridors etc., the overall effects on landscape elements within the Site is considered to be not significant as they are enhanced and strengthened. Over time and with the maturing of the new landscape proposals associated with each phase of the Development, the level of adverse effect would reduce slightly but would remain moderate - significant. The landscape within the LCA 094 Upper Ver Valley would benefit from the maturing of the new landscape proposals and green infrastructure associated with the SANG and provision of the country park and as a result the level of minor adverse effect would reduce sufficiently to be minor beneficial.
- 7.10.7 The assessment concludes that the wider character area beyond the Site would not experience significant effects. Due to the high level of perceived containment of the Site from existing boundary trees and hedgerows and the barriers formed by the intervening infrastructure and industrial estate, there would be little interconnectivity beyond this and therefore limited indirect effects on landscape character.
- 7.10.8 Turning to visual impact, at completion there would be significant adverse effects on the views experienced by receptors both within and close to the Site. In particular, residents along Cherry Tree Lane and Westwick Row would be significantly affected. Over time and with the maturing of the new landscape buffer proposals, the level of adverse effect would reduce but remain significant and adverse, either as the Development would remain visible in close proximity or that open views would be screened by vegetation which would change the character of views. It is noted that these two receptor groups represents approximately nine dwellings and approximately ten dwellings respectively and therefore represents a very small number of people.
- 7.10.9 Similarly for the more distant cluster of residential receptors on the highway near Old Jeromes, views would span the north and south development parcels and the full extent of the commercial area, which would in combination, change the horizon across a wide extent of the view. It is noted that this receptor group represents three dwellings on the west of the lane and therefore represents a very small number of people.
- 7.10.10 There would also be significant adverse effects for users of the PRoWs on elevated ground but still in close proximity to the Site directly north and east where the latter gain clear views of the commercial area. The views off these receptors would be notably softened by the embedded mitigation but the level of adverse effect would reduce but remain significant and adverse.
- 7.10.11 With regards to receptors East of the M1 motorway and adverse effects as a result of the commercial area specifically, opportunities, as noted above, to minimise the visual effect of the buildings should be carefully applied during detailed design of the upper eastern facades which would not be filtered by views of trees even at year 15.

Mitigation recommendations would include articulation of the façade with gradation of colour, use of recessive colours and non-reflective materials. Furthermore, ensuring breaks in the skyline formed by the buildings would also inevitably contribute to minimising the adverse effects.

- 7.10.12 There would not, however, be a significant effect on users of the highway network, views from The Chilterns NL, the Registered Park and Garden at Gorhambury House, or the Aubrey Fort site, nor from the private residences to the north and north-east, or those of Leverstock Green noted as significant adverse during construction.
- 7.10.13 Users of the remaining PRoW network in proximity to the Site to the south and north-east, and those using the Nickey Line also would not experience significant adverse effects, and similarly for PRoW users at a greater distance from the Site to the north-east or east. The mature retained and established vegetation within the Site and along its boundaries will heavily filter views, with the very small number of those receptors affected by the operational development being in close proximity and on slightly elevated ground.
- 7.10.14 Overall, it is considered that the completed and operational Development would result in some significant effects on the landscape and identified receptors, and as such would give rise to significant effects for landscape and visual. However, these effects are constrained to receptors within and immediately adjacent the Site and for a Development of this scale are limited.
- 7.10.15 Although significant landscape impacts are identified the site has been allocated within the 2041 Draft Local Plan; this is therefore a material consideration in the planning decision despite not being fully adopted at the time of writing. Therefore, a level of assumption has been made that whilst there will be some inevitable adverse landscape effects, that these will be mitigated by detailed design.
- 7.10.16 As noted above, the submitted St Albans Draft Local Plan includes a review of the Green Belt boundary which would almost entirely exclude the extent of proposed built development from being within Green Belt. Should this designation boundary be reduced the development would be considered differently in LVIA terms, and an addendum to this Chapter should be sought which may lead to the reduction in some adverse effects.
- 7.10.17 The observations upon lighting effects are limited to receptors on highways and within residential properties. Lighting will be seen in the context of the existing Industrial Estate, the M1 motorway and Hemel Hempstead which all frame the Site. A full lighting strategy will be developed to give consideration to the receptors identified as sensitive to this impact. Further assessment can then be undertaken if required. It is inevitable that the Development would introduce new light sources, and this should be managed sensitively.

Cumulative Effects

- 7.10.18 There are cumulative visual effects anticipated from the Development with three of the Cumulative Schemes identified.
- 7.10.19 Maylands Avenue would experience significant adverse effects during the operational phases for both the users of Breakspear Way and the LCA of the combined sites. This is notably due to the effects already being Significant

adverse for the Development in isolation. Sensitive management of the highway works associated with the latter would potentially manage to reduce or eliminate the cumulative effects during this phase.

7.10.20 North Hemel (5/2025/0645) and Land off Cherry Tree Lane 5/2024/0927 are part of the HGC Concept Framework Plan and are therefore composed to integrate as part of the wider expansion of Hemel Hempstead. Cumulative and inter-related effects are both intentional and inevitable and therefore it is anticipated that construction phases would be sensitively managed to reduce or eliminate the cumulative effects during that phase. During operation (Year 15), the significant adverse cumulative effect is reduced to one visual receptor – Users of Redbourn Road which dissects the two sites and where notable disturbance to the view is inevitable due to the scale of the combined HGC project.