

Top Garage Site,
Hereford Road (A465),
Bromyard.

**LANDSCAPE & VISUAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT**

COMMISSIONED BY:

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (LVIA) has been prepared by Greenway LA Ltd on behalf of Mr. N. Davis & Mr. R. Mason (Top Garage (Bromyard) Ltd) - Clients & Site Owners) and it seeks to assess the effects and impacts of the proposals (i.e. the re-development of the urban land currently being used as a garage forecourt, car sales & motor mechanical repair workshops) for residential use. The site is located at the confluence of the Hereford Road (A465) and Pannier's Lane junction near Bromyard. Planning permission for residential properties along with associated access and landscaping is proposed. The scheme includes the retention of the existing trees and existing hedgerows where possible whilst demolishing the existing structures (circa early 1970's or thereabouts).

1.2 The existing baseline situation relating to the application site is 'Urban' although it is surrounded by open countryside (Timbered Plateau Farmlands) occupies an elevated site it is considered to be an outlier of Bromyard which is less than 1 mile distant. The sensitivity of the site set in the local landscape character and its current visual intrusion as a previously developed site are important considerations as the sites existing use and its visual amenity is considered to be incongruous and light pollution is a sensitive issue in what is otherwise a 'dark sky' location. The effects of the proposals on these considerations and any potential mitigation measures to improve matters need to be established to ensure the redevelopment lessens the impact on the adjacent countryside.

1.3 For the purpose of the LVIA the site is referred to as the 'Application Site' and the proposals are referred to as the 'Scheme Proposal'. The boundary of the Application Site is set out in Appendix 1.0 of this appraisal.

1.4 The appraisal is set out under seven sections including this introduction:

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| Section One | - Introduction |
| Section Two | - provides a summary and approach of the methodology used for the appraisal. |
| Section Three | - assesses the baseline situation of the Application Site and the surrounding area's landscape character and visual amenity. |
| Section Four | - describes the Scheme Proposal and should be read in conjunction with BM3 Architects Design Statement in Support of the planning application. |
| Section Five & Six | - Provide an assessment of effects of the Scheme Proposal on the previously identified baseline situation and representative viewpoints. |
| Section Seven | - A summary of findings is given at the end of the document. |

1.5 The LVIA is supported by a series of appendices including site photographs, maps and illustrations, which can be found at the end of the document. A list of these is given at the end of the report.

1.6 The relevant planning policy context within which the Scheme Proposal is considered is dealt with by the Planning Consultant but has been summarised by the Planning Case Officer (Mr. Carl Brace) in his letter dated 18th December 2020. This LVIA is in direct response to this pre-application advice whereby the 'Landscape' requirements are clearly outlined in this document (see Appendix 8.0).

1.7 In summary the pre-application advice advises that:

- The landscape Character Type is 'Urban' set within surrounding Timbered Plateau Farmlands.
- The site is considered 'Brownfield'.
- Important green infrastructure assets need to be taken into account.
- Redevelopment of the site would have 'low landscape impacts if well designed to fit into the surroundings.
- Local distinctiveness, connections to green infrastructure & bio-diversity need to be considered in bring forward proposals.
- Designs should reference local character.
- The design should respond to the sites prominence as a 'gateway' into Bromyard being visually prominent and have regard to long views towards The Malvern Hills AONB & Bromyard Downs.

1.8 Relevant Sections of the National Policy Framework include:

- Chapter 12 Achieving Well Designed Places
- Chapter 14 Meeting the challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coast change.
- Chapter 15 Conserving & Enhancing the Natural Environment.

1.9 Development proposals should be in accordance with the following Core Strategy Policies pertaining to the Landscape:

- SS6 Environment Quality & Local Distinctiveness.
- SS7 Addressing Climate Change.
- LD1 Landscape & Townscape.
- LD2 Bio-diversity & Geo-diversity.
- LD3 Green Infrastructure.

1.10 The planning case officer has advised that in order to support any future planning application the following information should be considered:

- A Landscape led Masterplan should be produced.
- Pedestrian connectivity & outdoor use should be included in proposals.
- Creation of Green & Healthy Environments.
- Tree planting makes successful places for residential use.
- Climate resilience & Carbon neutral development should be achieved.
- Bio-diversity should be increased (i.e. a net gain)
- Landscape Design should be appropriate and fit for place & purpose.

1.11 An application for the site should be supported with the following:

- Tree Survey Plan.
- Tree Constraints Plan.
- Arboricultural Impact Plan.
- Tree Protection Plan.
- Hard Landscape Proposals.
- Soft Landscape Proposals.
- Landscape Maintenance & Management Plan.
- Drainage & Water Management Proposals.
- Material & Colour Design.
- Lighting considerations, given the contextual setting (i.e. Local Dark Skies).
- Open Space Provision (off site contributions).

2.0 Appraisal Methodology

2.1 The methodology and approach adopted in undertaking this appraisal relies on a structured, informed and reasoned approach using informed professional judgement and takes into account a combination of both quantitative and qualitative factors.

Study Area

2.2 The Application Site is shown in Appendix 4.0 (Topographic Survey) and covers an area of approximately 5384.28 square metres (1.33 acres) in extent. It is described on Daltons Business sales as:

“Petrol Station, MOT station & garage services in Bromyard, Herefordshire” and as a “Potential Development Site for dwelling (1 acre)”.

2.3 The sales particulars describe the established business as a petrol station having been run for 50 years (established circa 1970) which corresponds with the regression surveys undertaken (see Appendix 1.6-1.11).

2.4 A field study appraisal and walkover was undertaken by a Chartered Landscape Architect who is a specialist in landscape assessment on 27th & 29th March 2021 with subsequent re-visits on 30th March 2021. These detailed walkovers were undertaken during overcast and partially overcast day with good visibility as per the photographic evidence taken from various vantage points. The Application Site, its immediate neighbour (i.e. Hope Family Centre) and its surrounding context being notably open countryside was noted and the landscape features and local distinctiveness was recorded & verified during these extensive walkovers. A number of potential visual receptors were also identified by undertaking a desk top study (mapping & documents) to give a theoretical Zone of Visual Influence which was checked against the actual Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI). The office base assessment uses historical mapping & topographical data including advisory documents (e.g. Herefordshire Strategic

Flood Risk Assessment 2019, Table 6.9.1 Spatial Planning & Development Control Recommendations) and other relevant information sources.

The field study / walkover involved traversing the landscape and travelling throughout the study area to produce a working photographic record of the site in its contextual landscape setting and these have been used to compile this report to enable an assessment from the public domain and in specific instances where property owners or farmers permitted access but principally adopted roads, adopted footpath & bridleways (PROWS) and byways were used as shown in Appendix 1.3 and the Ordnance Survey Maps used under the practices Paper Licence (100046524).

- 2.5** A detailed topographic survey has been produced (Appendix 4.0) and has been used in conjunction with mapping to extrapolate the local topography and landform within the study area as the local landscape comprises many undulations with the undercutting of valleys by the River Frome and its tributaries including dingles, ditches and brooks from higher land on which the site is situated. A detailed tree & hedge survey has been undertaken which recommended that these features are retained wherever possible. These are shown in Appendix 4.1 and the Aerial Photograph of the site (Appendix 1.1) and the feasibility plan which indicates the retention of existing trees (Appendices 5.3 & 5.4).

Methodology

- 2.6** The appraisal is carried out in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (2013); and 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' (2014). The methodology adopted for this report is shown on the following page (Fig.2).
- 2.7** In summary the approach is to establish the baseline condition of the existing landscape character and visual receptors of the Application Site and its surroundings. The Scheme Proposal (Feasibility) is then discussed and the potential degree of 'effect' it will have is predicted at different stages (i.e. short & medium / longer term). The final stage is the long term 'residual effect' of the Scheme Proposal once the landscape planting has matured and the development becomes assimilated into the local landscape particularly where the development proposals have been devised by adopting a landscape led approach to ensure that local distinctiveness, bio-diversity and the colour, textures and grain of built form is integrated into the contextual setting.

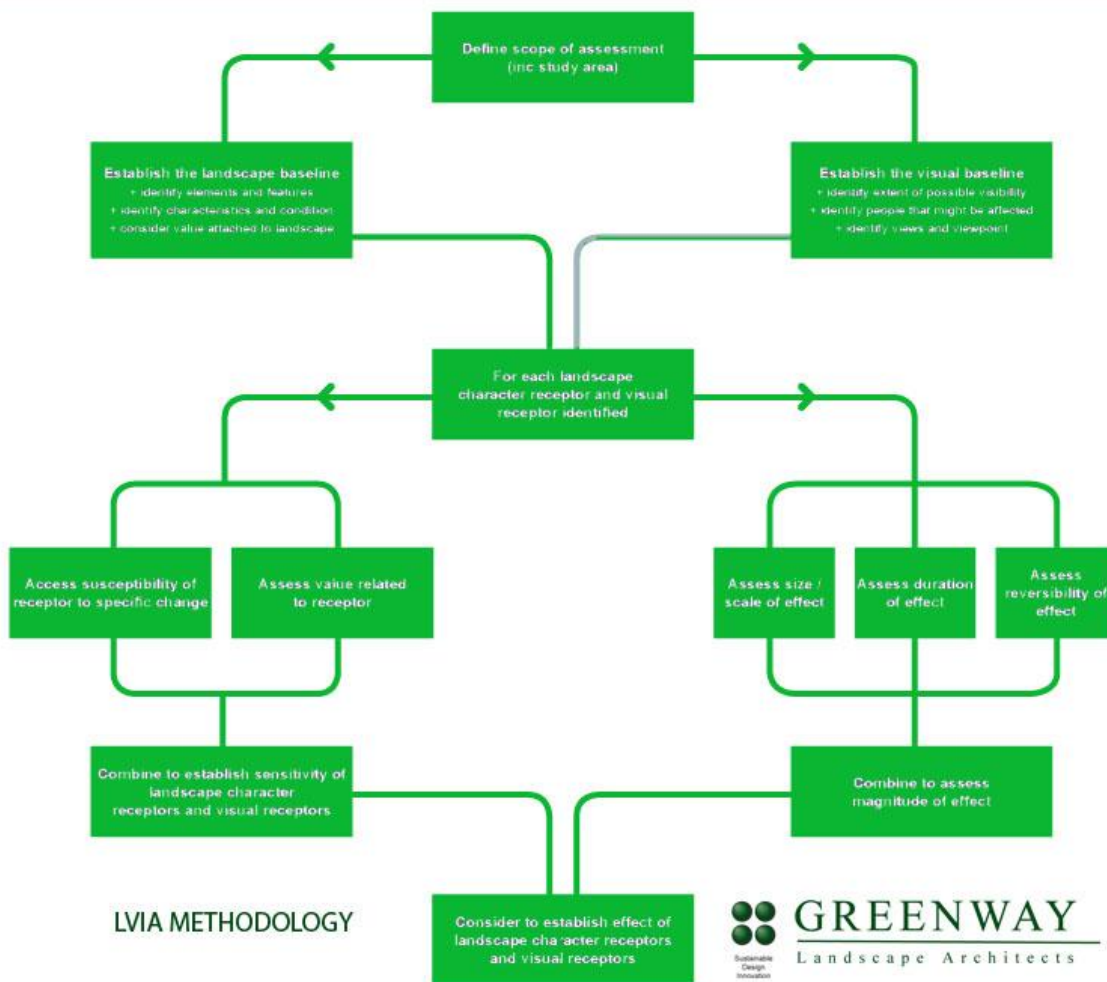


Fig 1: LVIA Methodology Flow Diagram

3.0 Baseline Appraisal

3.1 Landscape Designations

The Application Site lies within Hereford County Council (HCC) administrative area in Bromyard (Urban) and is immediately adjacent to the Winslow, Linton & Avenbury Parishes being a peninsula of urban land (ribbon development) on a ridge line which is an historical route forming the division of the catchment.

Planning Policy for the district is set out in the Planning Consultants report but the relevant policies set out in 1.8 & 1.9 above are useful for establishing a baseline appraisal to consider the development impacts and any improvements that may be achieved in bring forward residential development (landscape matters).

In terms of the development site it is noted that:

- The site is adjacent to Open Countryside to the East, West and South being described as Timbered Plateau Farmlands.

- The site itself is described as being 'Urban' and is brownfield land if it were to be redeveloped for housing (residential use) instead of its existing commercial land use.
- The site itself has no specific designations or other statutory protection.
- The site is in close proximity to Birchyfields Landscape Park, Avenbury (SMR Number 31138) with an Estate & Walled Garden which is apparent when consulting the regression survey 1930's Ordnance Survey (see Appendix 1.8). The parkland trees form a dominant landscape feature abutting the development site and are contiguous with the site on the western side of Panniers Lane.
- Birchyfields House and drive are shown on the 1831 OS 1 inch map without any parkland, although this is shown on later mapping (i.e. 1885 OS 6 inch map). The house itself is a Grade II (List Entry Number 1176339) being designated on 12th April 1973. The house is circa 18th Century with Stucco being 2 storeys, 5 windows, sashes with voussoirs and keyblocks. The house is adorned with a Porch with fluted Doric columns, Parapet, Piedmont on the left hand return being at NGR SO64077353713. Legacy No.150880. Location is approximately 500m from the site but is not considered to be a Receptor as it is obscured by the parkland trees.
- Little Frome, Avenbury is a listed Farmstead (Grade II – List Entry Number 1212270) being listed on 9th April 1952 located at NGR SO 6522053597 which dates back to the 16th Century. The dwelling is 1000m from the site and is not considered to be a 'Receptor' being obscured by intervening woodland, topography and landform.
- Bromyard Town has numerous listed buildings but are consider too far distant to be affected by the proposed development.
- Long distance views of the Malvern Hills AONB are seen from the elevated ridgeline which both Hereford Road (A465) AND Panniers Lane exploit. However, the site is beyond the 'Quotidian' landscape surrounding this high status designation in my professional opinion as the AONB is considered to be too far distant to be affected by the scale of the development being proposed.
- The site is seen from the Bromyard Downs and unenclosed common land which looks over Bromyard and the River Frome Valley being conspicuous as it occupies the ridgeline leading south out of Bromyard towards Hereford and has the woodland background due to the site proximity to the
- The site is directly opposite AV8 (PROW) which emerges onto Panniers Lane running along the Birchyfields Woodland edge to the Parkland (see Appendix 1.3) with some extensive views of the Malvern's emerging over the stile.
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- Other PROWS are shown in Appendix 1.3 but most are too far distant or obscured by landform and/or intervening features to be affected by the proposed development even given its elevated location with the exception of the local Bromyard Walks & Herefordshire Trail (namely, PROW AV1A & AV1B, B7 & B8).

3.2 Landscape Elements

The following features have been identified as contributing to both the landscape character of the Application Site and its surrounding area in addition to the designated landscape components outlined in section 3.1. These features are likely to influence the intervisibility of the Application Site from the surrounding area dependant on their retention & future management.

3.3 Application Site Features

- 3.3.1** The Application Site consists of an 'Urban' parcel of land extending to approximately 1.33 acres or thereabouts including the highway verges measured from the Topographic Survey.
- 3.3.2** No listed buildings are on the site. The listed buildings in the vicinity are sufficiently distant to not be affected by the development proposals. 'Birchyfields' House is 500m distant and screened by existing landscape parkland and a dense tree belt to the south west of the site and this wooded area form a green backdrop to the development when viewed from the north along both Hereford Road and Panniers Lane.
- 3.3.3** The site occupies the ridgeline (167.093 AOD, Panniers Lane & 166.528m Hereford Road) that is the watershed of the River Frome (to the east) and its tributaries (e.g. Hackley Brook to the west) and is not subject to flooding according to the Environment Agencies flood map being with Flood Zone 1 (see **Fig.2**).
- 3.3.4** The existing trees and hedgerows on site are recorded in Appendices 4.1, 4.2 & 4.3. The three Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) form a soft screen on approaching the site from the south but are set back so as not to obscure the Petrol Station forecourt and signage and canopy associated with the commercial enterprise which are incongruous dominant features in the rural scene the urban parcel being surrounded by rural land cover parcels (LCP's). These three trees are the most significant vegetation on site and should be retained.
- 3.3.5** The hedgerows are all managed being 'faced up' & 'lopped' to either maintain visibility of the existing commercial use of the various forecourts and to maintain visibility of signage (i.e.H3) or are left slightly taller where vehicle storage is being screen from view (i.e. H4).H2a is within the Hope Centre ownership and forms the sites northern boundary.
- 3.3.6** T4 is a self-set Willow spp. which is far too close to the built form and may not be the most appropriate species having a high water demand and has large

ultimate height and spread for the limited station it occupies. Removal should be considered to protect the longer term structural integrity of the Hope Family Centre. T5 is a sapling Ash spp. and is capable of being mitigated if removed.

- 3.3.7** H1 is an inter-alia conifer species and is inappropriate in this rural location and is heavily pruned being 'faced up' and 'lopped' and of poor quality.
- 3.3.8** The other vegetation recorded is off site is mainly agricultural hedgerows which provide stock barriers (sheep rearing/lambing noted during walkover) and is likely to be 'parliamentary' enclosure. The hedges have both been layed in the past and more recently 'flailed' being relatively intact but with occasional gaps. The management of these features are not within the auspices of the applicants 'gift' and therefore their appearance, form, height, shape and form are determined by the adjacent land owners. It is unlikely that their future management will form any part of the sites management strategy being outside of the applicant's control.
- 3.3.9** The other dominant tree cover in the vicinity is T7 (Oak) within the school grounds and W1 (Oak) within the Parkland Estate of Birchyfields House. As with the agricultural hedges these form backdrops to the development site but the management of these are unlikely to be affected. It should be noted that these features do provide a degree of screening of the site from the southern and northern aspects.
- 3.3.10** The crossfall across the sites northern boundary from Panniers Lane (166.27m AOD) to Hereford Road (164.666m AOD) is a 1.6m difference. At the confluence of the two roads at the junction the height is 167.046m AOD. Tree T3 occupies the highest point on site at 167.15m AOD. A Bench Mark of 554.5 feet (169.012m) is recorded on the 1885 map (see Appendix 1.7).

3.4 Surrounding Features

- 3.4.1** The land surrounding the site is in predominantly agricultural use for arable crops (winter wheat to the east) and permanent pasture to the west (sheep & lambing noted during walkovers). The southern aspect is dominated by the road junction and access to Birchyfields with its highway verge and visibility splays and tree planting of feathered Beech (T8).
- 3.4.2** The Parkland Estate of Birchyfields (parcel 192 some 9.738 acres) is screened off by a substantial wooded boundary (Reptonian in character) and is a dominant local landscape feature (Parcels 193, 194 & 205 on the 1886 mapping some 2.65 acres) and can be seen from many aspect as shown in the selected Viewpoints (see Appendix 6.00 - 6.07 inclusive).
- 3.4.3** This woodland plantation is likely to have been planted in the 18 century as part of the gentrification of Birchyfields estate as was the fashion during this period. Interestingly a small built structure and outbuilding are shown on the 1886 OS which may have been a tool house and or small dwelling / wayside cottage (see Fig 3).

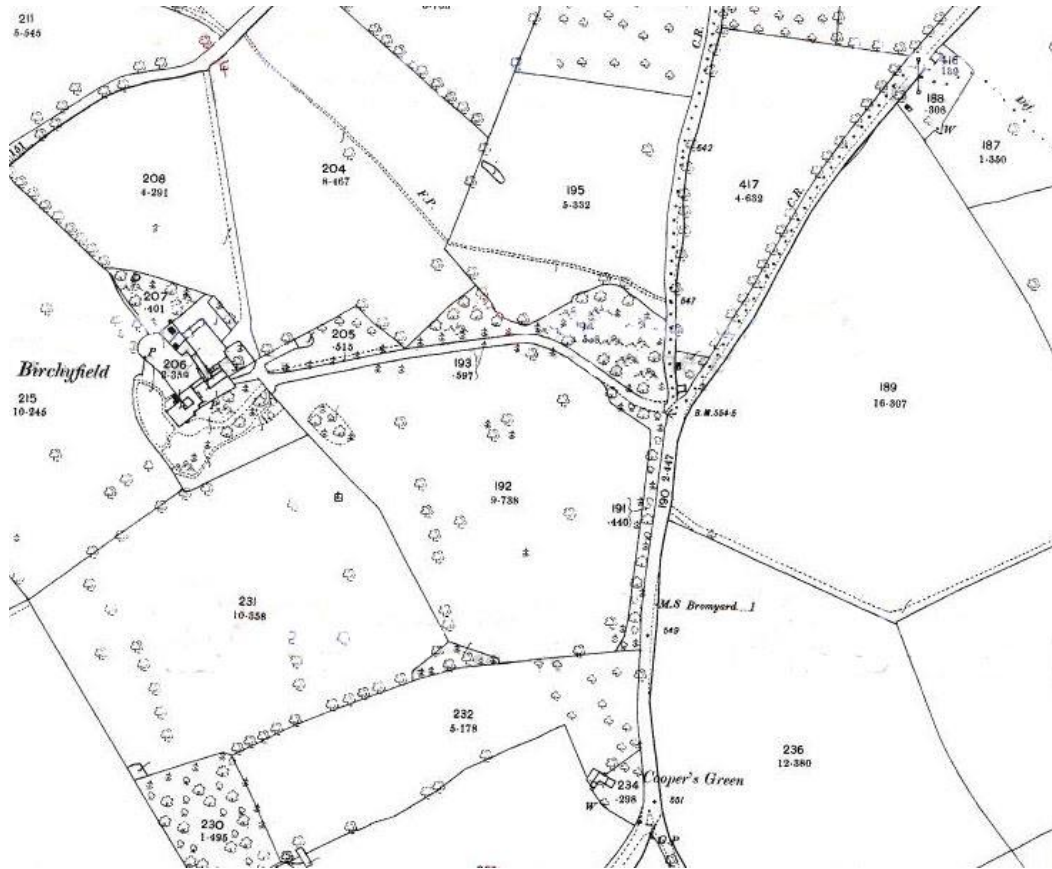


Fig 3: Extract from 1886 OS showing parcel references.

- 3.4.4** The site occupies the southern tip of parcel 417.(formerly 4.889 acres) referred to as 'Greenfields' on later mapping, but in recent years has been developed for educational, industrial, commercial and residential uses having an unkempt appearance and many building of poor architectural merit with the exception of the Hope Family Centre. The 1844 map of Bromyard clearly shows the parcel being under agricultural use (Hops) but this use doesn't appear to be represented which may be due to the blight in the 1860's when many hop fields were removed and the gradual decline into the 20th Century due to foreign competition and other husbandry issues. In 1883 hops were grown over 12,371 acres in 81 parishes in Herefordshire including Greenfields. No evidence of the Hop plants or supporting structures as the plants grow up to 20 feet in height remains in the vicinity as the parcel has been much 'urbanised' during the latter half of the 20th century.
- 3.4.5** The mixed uses together with the Petrol Filling Station & Hope Family Centre are both urban use set with a landscape context and both generate primary sources of light pollution. The excessive use of security lamps shine out across the open countryside and are considered a major detractor particularly throughout the winter periods when the trees and hedges are dormant (naked). The lighting is considered to be a negative feature that is both a nuisance and destroys the local dark skies by the lack of control of light spillage at source.
- 3.4.6** None of the remaining structures on the parcel being brought forward have any historical merit and no evidence of the former toll house or wayside cottage is

evident or artefacts of the parcels agricultural past. The presence of converted hop kiln structures in the local landscape (e.g. Avenbury) are a reminder of this former land use which was much more extensive as was orchards (see regression plan survey (Appendix 1.6-1.11

3.4.7 The Urban use of the 'parcel' to the north of the application site is illustrated in the regression survey and whilst remote from Bromyard itself the site is directly related to the town needs particularly the large secondary school campus and playing fields (Queen Elizabeth High School). The scrapyards, blacksmiths & ironworkers site with the large commercial sheds and conifer screening planted to presumably soften the visual intrusion of these structures from an otherwise rural context with panoramic views to the wider landscape both eastward and westward are due to the sites elevated position.

3.5 Bromyard & Surroundings.

3.5.1 A mile post on the Hereford Road (A465), north of Coopers Green (see Fig 3) illustrates that the site is at least three quarters of a mile from Bromyard Town Centre. Whilst Bromyard itself has many fine Historic & Listed Buildings with a Conservation Area (see Appendix 1.5) it is considered too far distant to be affected by the proposals and that other recent development (low quality) and a proposed housing regeneration site (Herefordshire Council & Keepmoat) is notable in bringing forward residential housing on previously development land with an access off Hereford Road a quarter of a mile or so north of the Top Garages northern boundary.

3.5.2 An adopted highway footpath along the eastern carriageway is present and subject to improvements and extending this to Top Garage is capable of providing a short walk into Bromyard. A crossing point and linkage would need to be provided to make this a sustainable location. The loss of grass verge and introduction of the latter would have an urbanising impact.

3.5.3 Whilst the walk along Panniers Lane is more tortuous it is however possible with some care (i.e. using the Countryside Code with oncoming traffic) and verges are available for walkers refuge although this is less than ideal.

3.5.4 The local network of public rights of way (PROW) provides some leisure routes through open countryside with isolated farmsteads, isolated dwellings and some high quality old farm buildings and new barns of variable quality no doubt functional but these lack architectural merit whereas the refurbished original buildings have a high degree of local distinctiveness using local stone & brick with horizontal boards, these groupings form cohesive farmyard courts & farmsteads.

3.5.5 The large scale of the newer farm buildings in direct comparison with the more historic built form are an imposition on the landscape grain and the functional built outbuildings pay little attention to the local vernacular in terms of scale, materials or design. In some locations these newer farm outbuildings degrade the overall quality of the landscape by their brutalistic appearance and factory farming approach leaving old barns in a ramshackled condition where they haven't already been converted. This is especially noticeable from the public realm,

footpaths and byways especially along the Herefordshire Trial (PROW B8 & AV1A in part). The appreciation of the landscape is somewhat demeaned in my professional opinion but the necessity of food production, which would seemingly only be viable by using such large and visually dominant structures, is imposed on the grain and pattern language of an earlier landscape character that was once on a much smaller scale.

3.5.6 The landscape architect during his extensive walkovers noted the local vernacular and use of traditional building materials including local stone in boundary walls and boarding in the built form and boundaries. The image sheet in **Fig.4** was issued to the Project Architects to influence their choices as a more appropriate palette of materials to ensure the new designs for the site took account of the local distinctiveness and landscape character in this part of Bromyard (see below).

Local Details / Vernacular to inform Design Process

APPENDIX 0.00



GLA-877 Top Garage Site, A465 Hereford Road / Panniers Lane, Bromyard.

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Fig.4: Local Details / Vernacular (taken during LVIA WALKOVER)

3.5.7 Some other examples on how similar garage sites with space constraints had been arranged as a starting point to augment the Planning officers pre-application feedback requiring a Landscape led (informed) Masterplan was also issued to the Project Architects to illustrate what needed to be altered in terms of scale and massing in respect to the proposed development being more in tune with the immediate surroundings and that the choices needed to be varied from the initial scheme proposed to respect the contextual setting to harmonise with the local environment in terms of colour, texture, grain and form. **Fig. 5, Fig 6 & Fig.7** were issued to further illustrate these requirements using relatively local examples on similarly constrained sites.



GLA-877 Top Garage Site, A465 Hereford Road / Panniers Lane, Bromyard.



Fig.5: Other Local Examples of Built form using Local Vernacular



GLA-877 Top Garage Site, A465 Hereford Road / Panniers Lane, Bromyard.



Fig 6: Example of former Garage Site on Corner Housing Development



GLA-877 Top Garage Site, A465 Hereford Road / Panniers Lane, Bromyard.

Fig. 7: Conversion of old farm buildings to residential use (influences of mass, form & scale in local vernacular)

3.5.8 Much of the central part of Bromyard is within a Conservation Area with many historic market town buildings as shown in Appendix 1.5. However due to the intervening development along Hereford Road and Panniers Lane the landscape consultant concluded that the development of this satellite site was unlikely to have any impacts on these designated assets being too far distance and outside the visual envelope of the site.

3.5.9 In terms of other assets the potential adverse impacts of the architects initial proposals on the Birchyfields unregistered parkland, adjacent PROW AV8 and trees T1, T2 & T3 and the remnant agricultural hedges was more of a concern and the Landscape led approach to reviewing the designs led the design team to make significant changes to reduce the order of impacts to give an acceptable solution and significantly reduce the imposition of an urban scheme into what is essential a rural setting. A number of frank discussions and a dialogue occurred and the scheme was modified to take account of this landscape lead approach.

3.6 Public Rights of Way (PROWS) & Adopted Footpaths adj. to Highways.

3.6.1 The public rights of way (PROW's) references are taken from Herefordshire County Council's Definitive Map (See Appendix 1.3) and this illustrates that the landscape is moderately accessible given the sites location and has good walking opportunities and connections to this countryside albeit it is reliant on the walker using the local roads in part to access the PROW network. Once the walker is on the PROW's the vies are largely occupied by open fields in agricultural use and for rearing livestock.

- 3.6.2** The nearest PROW to the west of the site, on the opposite side of Panniers Lane B4214, AV8 crosses open fields in pasture with sheep grazing (in lamb) and the proposed developments upper storey, roofscape and canopy are seen from much of the paths alignment between styles through the agricultural hedges dividing fields. The local topography does dip away to Pencombe Lane and the lower land associated with Hackley Brook a tributary of the River Frome which encircles Bromyard.
- 3.6.3** Other glimpsed and a few open views are seen from a number of vantage point along the footpath network and these are described in the Viewpoints selected later in this report. To summarise the visual envelope identified paths as likely candidates and the landscape consultant walked those stretches of path that were most likely to have some view toward the site. Many length of PROW and adopted footpaths have views toward the site as it occupies the ridgeline of high ground and is on the skyline from a number of viewpoints.
- 3.6.4** Generally the footpaths were in good condition underfoot although a few sections were poached and sodden and difficult to negotiate. Some improvement of around gates and styles is recommended and the way marking needs to be improved with many signs faded, broken or missing. In one location due to lambing and dogs roaming off leads a local farmer complained about a fence that had been cut to allow the free run of animals along the Herefordshire Trail at the confluence of AV1A & AV1B. I would strongly recommend that a dog passing stile/gate is provided at this location and the drainage on this section of pathway is improved as it is difficult to use unless wearing stout boots or wellingtons. Perhaps some of the off-sites financial contribution could be used to carry out these improvements with additional signage to help the legibility of the routes for identification on the ground which without mapping is difficult.
- 3.6.5**
- 3.6.6** In terms of the section of footpath with views I would summarise those affected as follows:
- Public rights of ways (PROW) & footpaths / verges running to the west & north-west of the Application Site (see Appendix 1.3) include:
 - AV8) - footpath runs through open field to west of site from Pencombe Lane to Pannier Lane.
 - WN7 - footpath runs over open ploughed/ cultivated field and the Top Garage workshop and canopy is seen from approx.. 3km away but is insignificant in the panoramic view albeit the white canopy and render elevation are conspicuous. Approx. 1000 linear metre or so is affected but some intervening landscape elements interrupt these views. Similar views off the minor road at 52.184897, - 2.563462 to 52.182671, - 2.562575, south of Green Lane (for some 800 linear metre or so) has views of the site. WN7 was ploughed at the time of the walker with emerging winter wheat so the assessment was taken at Viewpoint 5
 - Pencombe Lane doesn't have footpaths but some limited views from the soft verges can be seen over hedges and through farm

- gates apertures and the stile gap in the agricultural hedgerow (Viewpoint 3).
- The adopted footpath north of the Eastbound carriageway of the A44 has views over the 'flailed' sections of agricultural hedgerow, but the path is partially overgrown and in a poor state with regenerative weed growth causing the path to be narrow & difficult to walk along. There is no path on the southern verge.
 - Pannier Lane adjacent to the site only has highway verges which are too narrow to negotiate and the walker has to adopt the countryside code to oncoming traffic to remain safe. No views from those lengths of footpath where they do occur north of the School entrance give rise to views of the development site. From the verges the curvature of the lane restricts visibility and the high hedge H7 & Oak tree (T7) almost completely obscures the site from view with occasional heavily filtered glimpsed views only possible from the odd location, but due to the absence of formal footpaths the walker's attention is on avoiding conflicts with oncoming traffic.
- Public rights of way (PROW), footpath & verges located south & south-west of the Application Site within the study area (Appendix 1.3), which have a view of the site include:
 - AV6 Bridleway – none due to landform & intervening vegetation. -).
 - The A465 south of the site has both clear views near the junction with Panniers Lane from soft verges for 100m or so and partially obscured views as the road twists for another 175m (approx..) and the gradient alters due to the landform and flanking vegetation (intact flailed) agricultural hedgerows) which screen the site from view almost entirely. However, where sections of hedge are uncut the site is obscured from view or heavily filtered. The site is totally obscured from the cottage at Cooper's Green, even given the absence of leaf cover and was discounted as a Receptor.
 - The B4214 also lacks footway but some view of the Petrol Filling Station (PFS) are evident from some limited length of soft verge on the northbound carriageway side (west) as described in Viewpoint 7 from the junction with the A465 (partially obscured / heavily filtered)
 - Only heavily filtered views of the PFS can be seen from the upper parts of PROW AV1A due to the dormancy of local woodland & only then identifiable due to the site illuminated signs. In leaf the views would be totally obscured. The majority of the footpath in the valley of the River Frome has no view of the PFS due to intervening topography, woodland, dingles and farm buildings. An occasional open view does occur at high points or where hedgerows have been layed or through gaps (fragmented sections along AV1A). refer to Viewpoint 10.
 - Public rights of way (PROW), footpaths, verges & open common land located south east & east of the Application Site within the study area which have a view of the site include:

- A1VA - see VP10 as above described in Viewpoint 10.
- AV1B – no views as obscured by intervening landform , buildings & wooded / copse areas along dingles & folds in the topography..
- Herefordshire Trail - see VP10 as the route follows AV1A & AV1B. Where views are seen these see the PFS & canopy on the skyline but from limited viewpoints (gaps in hedge / over layed hedge line).
- B7
- B8
- AV3 – Views are not apparent but a minor heavily filtered view may be possible from very limited locations. The walker wouldn't be conscious of the PFS/Hope centres presence if the lighting was not on at dusk/overnight.
- Avenbury Lane (Minor Road – Viewpoint 8) – The step incline lane leading down to Avenbury Court has fragmented hedgerows and in some sections 300m or so is absent being replaced by strained post and wire / barbed wire fencing. From these sections of degraded lane open views of the PFS are clearly seen 1.5-1.75km away as the application site occupies the skyline with the dominant woodland at Birchyfields being a distinct landmark. Beyond the farm courtyard with converted building /hop kiln and cottages at Avenbury only occasional glimpsed views are possible from the public domain but upper storey views are likely to be seen from the private residences.
- Whilst heavily obscured, views from the lane at Avenbury Court are possible through the working area / barns access. No views are possible further towards the Site of St. Marys Church (remains) and the road bridge over the River Frome from the public domain but rear garden views from Avenbury Court are clearly visible particularly when the security lights are on the application site during the winter period.
- To the far south east views from Hill Oak Farm (Receptor 72) are possible over the agricultural hedges and through gateways from verges where they exist.
- An odd vantage point as one climbs/descends the gradient overlooking Hyde Farm at spot height of 122 (NGR SO 67162 52320) looking north west is possible being more obvious by the sites occupancy of the ridgeline & its illumination and proximity to the Birchyfields woodland
- Other views along this lane are intermittent but some panoramic views do occur where gaps in the hedgerow occur albeit the feature is largely intact.(i.e. the view at SO 67812 51600 at entrance to Lower House Farm (Receptor 76).
- PROW B7: Viewpoint 9 shows typical from both the minor road (Avenbury Lane) where it meets at the stile and descends the slope into the River Frome floodplain (cultivated under crop). Other views along this lane are possible from high points on contours or where the hedge is flailed and/or through agricultural gateways. No footpaths are present along the lane and verges are virtually non-existent.
- The site has extensive views of the Malvern Hills ridgeline and West Malvern in particular including Table Hill, North Hill & Worcestershire Beacon. Whilst the intervening landscape and distance from the Area of Outstanding Beauty (AONB) in my professional opinion rules out the

impacts of the development as negligible or nil the removal of the light source in the distant landscape would be beneficial to the night / dark sky's when looking east from such vantage points and receptors including walkers on the high hills and those elevated residences at West Malvern (e.g.. Ebrington Road at SO 76496 46888), but the large panorama makes the development site so tiny as to be discounted.

- Public rights of way (PROW), footpaths or verges located north east of the Application Site within the study area which have a view of the site include:
 - Bromyard Downs (open/common land – sensitive receptor). Views from the upper contours of the Bromyard Downs at NGR: SO 67174 55218 give clear panoramic views of Bromyard and the site is seen against the Birchyfields woodland being a significant landmark / feature in the local landscape.
 - Views from the minor road accessing the Bromyard Downs are seen where the vegetation gives way to open aspect views at several points and at the picnic / seating areas as illustrated in Viewpoint 13. The views are similar to the above description but some sections along the road are obscured by wooded slopes.
- Public rights of way (PROW), footpaths, verges & open common land located north east of the Application Site within the study area which have a view of the site include:
 - A465 Hereford Road and its adopted footpath to the west (southbound carriageway) varies along its length with views totally obscured, partially obscure and the site coming into full view as the walker approaches the site particularly past Ashfield Way at NGR SO 64749 54123 although some glimpsed views from the adopted footpath as far as NGR SO 64826 54237 are possible these are negligible.
 - Views from the adopted footpath on the southbound carriageway running from Ashfield Way to approx. SO 64474 53818 opposite The Hope Family Centre become more conspicuous with the canopy & PFS and workshop being set against the wooded backdrop OF THE Birchyfields Parkland which substantially screen views from the south/south west.

3.6.7 The remaining PROWS shown in Appendix 1.3 have not listed as these do not have any views of the development site.

3.7 Landscape Character Assessment

3.7.1 National Landscape Character Assessment (LCA's)

3.7.2 The Landscape Character Assessment for the Application Site is derived by consulting a series of descriptions from the macro to the micro level which includes Regional Character Areas (RCA's), Landscape Character Area's (LCA's), Landscape Description Units (LDUs) and the smallest element being Land Cover Parcels (LCPs) for the whole county. A primary source is the

Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Guidance 2004 (updated 2009) and Herefordshire's Local Plan Core Strategy 2011-2031

3.7.3 The Application Site Landscape Character is described from its Regional Context (LCA) to more local and specific descriptions in Landscape Description Units (LDU'S) and Land Cover Parcels (LCP's) as follows:

3.7.4 Regional

At a regional level, the site is located within Landscape Character Area 101 'Herefordshire Plateau' (Natural England). This countryside character area is illustrated in Appendix 2.0.

3.7.5 Herefordshire Plateau (Character Area 101)

This National Landscape Character Area is the peri-rural surroundings in which the application site extends into and is the landscape type within the study area (see Appendix 2.0). The areas Key characteristic are stated as follows:

- The gentle rolling plateau is dissected by small, narrow valleys and streams, such as Sapey Brook, which are deeply incised into the landscape. The plateau rises to its highest point where the impressive iron age hill forts of Garmsley Camp and Wall Hills Camp are sited.
- The rock of the area are the Upper Silurian Ragland Mudstone Formation, with mudstone and some sandstone, and the Lower Devonian St Maughans Formation, with a higher proportion of sandstone, laid down by seasonal streams crossing an arid landscape. Between the two is Bishop's Frome Limestone, a concentration of calcium carbonate deposited from solution as a lime-rich groundwater that evaporated in the hot, dry climate about 400million years ago. Glacial moraines of the Devensian Glaciation are found in the west of the area near Stoke Prior and Stretford, and scattered remnants of the earlier Anglian Glaciation are found further east and south. The area is overlain with shallow, poor soils. There are heavier loams and clays in the narrow valleys where they have cut into the underlying mudstones (see Appendix 1.12 & 1.13).
- The River Frome flows north to south, through Bromyard and Bishop's Frome; the River Lodon joins the Frome before its confluence with the River Lugg (see Appendix 1.14 for local Hydrology).
- Medium to large scale arable fields dominate the open, flatter ground. Smaller and more irregular areas of pasture and mixed farming are present on the undulating slopes and steeper valley sides of the river Teme, Lugg and Frome.
- The area features tranquil ancient woodland, nationally significant areas of lowland meadows, and traditional orchards that support veteran trees, known to be a stronghold for the population of noble chafer beetle (vulnerable in the UK). Wood pasture and parkland, with fine specimens of

veteran trees, are linked by ancient species rich hedgerows, which also support some veteran hedgerow trees.

- Hop fields and a distinctive square topped local type of hop kiln are evidence of the long history of hop growing around the fringes of the area.
- In numerous locations, particularly around Bromyard and Downs, hedgerows are notable for their fruit trees, damsons being particularly importance.
- The area feature sparsely populated hamlets, isolated churches, small manor houses and local country houses with parks. Most hamlets are dominated by buildings built using local reddish brown and grey sandstones. Timber-frame building tradition can be seen particularly clearly in the late medieval building of Lower Brockhampton House. The settlements are connected by a network of narrow, commonly deeply sunken lanes, a notable historical feature throughout.

3.7.6 Local

The local assessment of landscape character types has concentrated on the 3.0km study area, centred on the application site. The local study area is covered within the Landscape Character Assessment which provides an assessment of the landscape character types in some detail.

The landscape character assessment of the study area has been based on this information (see Appendix 2.1, 2.2 & 2.3) and is augmented with the empirical observations of the Chartered Landscape Architect who has undertaken a detail walkover of the site and its immediate surroundings. The field survey / walkover was carried out within the study area to verify the character types identified in this document and as advised in the pre-application response from Herefordshire's Planning Department in order that the development could be assessed within the knowledge of the landscape components in which the development was being placed. and its potential impacts of the local landscapes contextual setting.

The site being designated as 'urban' being a brownfield site having only been developed as late as the early 1970's is misleading as the surroundings are in fact rural in character and the site is like a peninsula set within open countryside and occupies an elevated high point in the landscape being particularly visible from both the east and western aspects. View north are curtailed by the Hope Family Centre on the whole with the exception of views along Hereford Road towards Bromyard and to the south / south west the Parkland of Birchyfields obscures the site from the wider landscape and some limited views along Hereford road from the south are noted but the gently rolling landform stops extensive views.

Where extensive views do occur toward the south east and eastern and north east these see in the far distance The Malvern Hills (AONB) & Bromyard Downs respectively being elevated landmarks and distinctive open access areas. The former has been largely discounted as being too far distance to be affected by the

landscape and visual impact of the said development with the exception of night time light pollution that emanates from Top Garage and its immediate neighbour the Hope Family Centre. View from the Downs being much closer are a significant consideration as the site is clearly seen albeit against a wooded backdrop of the 'Reptonian' plantation at Birchyfields..

3.7.7 Landscape Character Types (LCT's)

The study area is set within the Local Character Types as advised by the pre-application planning advice and whilst an 'Urban' parcel the overall context is:

- Urban (see Appendix 2.2).
- Timbered Plateau Farmlands (see Appendix 2.3).
- Riverside Meadows (see Appendix 2.4).

With extensive views from the site eastward towards the Malvern Hills, views to and from the Bromyard Downs, Ockeridge to the east and Clows Top (North) on clear day on the far distant skyline seen over the rolling hills of the Bromyard Plateau large tracts of landscape are obscured from view due to topography and intervening landscape residual element (i.e. woodland, incised valleys, landform & built form to the north).

3.7.8 Urban Land Use

The site is previously developed currently being a Petrol Filling Station with workshops, outbuildings and tanks associated with the motor trading forecourt business and is mainly laid to hardstanding's.

The PFS has a large white canopy over the petrol pumps which is visually intrusive into the wider landscape being seen from many locations in the surrounding open countryside and the building being rendered white are also conspicuous which is exacerbated by the existing built form occupying the ridgeline and a high point which is particularly visible for both the eastern and western aspects.

The existing vegetation on site is somewhat limited but includes three Trees (T1-T3) which compliment other trees on the opposite side of the junction of Pannier's Lane with the Hereford Road (A465) forming a gateway feature into Bromyard and the access track into the Birchfield's Estate although the house and formal walled garden are obscured by the plantations largely dating back to the 18th century landscape garden movement being 'Reptonian' in its design. Whilst Bluebells in this wooded area are notable the trees age class are predominantly from this landscape enhancement period but may have augmented a smaller parcel of more historic copse, covert or remnant woodland although none is shown on the regression mapping.

Where more ancient trees do occur they are notably within hedgerows and in the instance of T7 (Oak) are a remnant of an earlier agricultural landscape before being engulfed in peri-urban development that occurred in the 1970's.

The Oak tree is off site and unaffected by the proposals as is the Wooded Parkland of Birchyfields but they do provide a mature backdrop for the

development together with the intact field boundaries in the locality that are largely intact. Hedges on site (H2,H3 & H4) should be retained as part of the development constraints as these contribute to the rural character of the location.

The PFS and its white rendered buildings & canopy are of no architectural merit and with the associated illumination and lit up signage are considered to be visual detractors having a negative impact on the quality of the local landscape and are visible from several receptors and viewpoints.

The site can be described as previously used land, 'brownfield' and of low value in terms of its design attributes and is a detractor within the landscape in its current condition being a negative visual feature partly due to its intrusive appearance from an otherwise rural context.

The future management of sites through re-development should seek to enhance the landscape fabric and incorporate features that mitigate any adverse aspect associated with the site to include bio-diversity improvements / enhancement and restoration of existing landscape features where space permits this approach. Landscape restoration and/ or improvement should improve the site as an ecological and landscape resource making it a better place after works are completed.

3.7.9 Timbered Plateau Farmlands

This landscape character extends over the whole site surroundings which form the study area (3km or so):

Key Characteristics:

Primary

- field boundary hedgerows are thrown into visual prominence by the landform.
- wooded valleys and dingles.
- ancient wooded character

Secondary:

- mixed farming land use.
- linear pattern of woodland.
- organic enclosure pattern
- medium-open views.

Management guidelines and Environmental Mitigation:

Management should concentrate on Conservation & Enhancement of existing hedgerows and woodland. Appropriate management to strengthen hedgerows and replace the lost hedgerow Oaks, either by new planting or controlled regeneration would strengthen the pattern of the landscape. The scale could be strengthened by management techniques which encourage the natural regeneration of existing woodland and wooded dingles.

Landscape Architect's note:

It is noted that the site has limited opportunities for these guidelines but the reinforcement of hedgerows is a policy that should be adopted throughout the design by setting back the development and creating foraging & migration

linkages wherever possible. The site is relatively constrained being only 1.33 acres including the verges which do constrain the approach to be adopted especially as guidance is at a landscape scale. However, enhancements are still possible with some creative thinking.

Conservation:

- Conserve all native broadleaved woodland and restock with species of local provenance.
- Seek to influence management techniques to ensure the conservation and enhancement of hedgerows. (i.e. H4 to be layed – see **Fig .8**).
- Encourage natural woodland regeneration
- Conserve and restore tree cover along dingles and stream sides.
- Maintain the dispersed settlement pattern.

Enhancement

- Enhance the age structure of hedgerow Oaks through new planting or selective regeneration
- Encourage new woodland planting to reflect the shape, scale and composition of the existing ancient woodland character and favouring Oak as the dominant species.



Fig.8: Local management of Hedgerows along AV1A & B8 PROW leading to Little Frome Farm (NGR: SO 65347 53930) to be applied to H4 hedge (i.e. Traditional Laying).

3.7.10 Riverside Meadows:

These landscape characters is within the study area in the River Frome & Hackley Brook watercourses and associated meadows, some under cultivation but is unlikely to influence the sites management but are seen from site and views from some vantage points do observe Top Garage on its ridgeline and are part of the sites contextual setting being predominantly rural.

Key Characteristics

Primary:

- pastoral land use.
- well defined linear patterns of willow and alder.
- tree cover represented by stream side and hedgerow trees.
- unsettled landscape (*abandoned settlement, St Mary's Church at Avenbury*)

Secondary:

- wetland habitat.
- river channel
- hedge and ditch boundaries.

Management Guidelines & Environmental Mitigation

Built development should be actively discouraged as it will always lead to conflicts with flood water as well as being ontrary to the landscape character. Similarly, arable cropping leads not only leads to loss of landscape character but also to erosion and river pollution through silt and nitrate rich run off, particularly in flood conditions. Wetland habitat are becoming more scarce, therefore opportunities to conserve and restore them and to enhance biodiversity and landscape character by returning the land to a control annual flooding regime should be encouraged

Conservation Restoration & Enhancement (this guidance is not applicable to the application site but one of the receptors PROW B7, Viewpoint 9 illustrates this land use conflict and the recommendations will enhance screening of the application site over time):

- Conserve, restore and enhance continuous linear tree cover along hedge lines, ditches and watercourses.
- Conserve and restore wetland habitats and seek opportunities for further habitat creation.

Conservation:

- Conserve all areas of permanent pasture.
- Seek to retain the strongly linear form of the landscape.
- Discourage further drainage of waterside meadows
- Discourage built development.
- Discourage construction works that would interrupt the linear unity of the landscape.

Restoration:

- Seek opportunities to return arable areas to pasture.
- Explore opportunities to return to traditional patterns and processes of natural flooding cycles.
- Seek opportunities to restore natural river bank and bed features and resist further loss of river habitat.

3.7.11 Landscape Description Units (LDU) & Land Cover Parcels (LCP's)

The smaller Landscape Description Units (LDU) and Land Cover Parcels (LCP's) are more prescriptive of the local environs of the site giving specific characteristics present in the locality. Refer to these in the Appendix 3.0 (Mapping Extract) and Appendix 3.1 (Table of attributes) as follows:

3.7.12 LDU (Application Site):

- BP10.b - LDU - URBAN (see Section 3.7.8 & Appendix 2.2).

Other LDU's can be seen from vantage points within the site and these principally include the following LCP's (see Appendix 3.0 & 3.1):

- BP07.4: LDU - West Bromyard Timbered Plateau Farmlands (described below).
- BP09: LDU - Timbered Plateau Farmlands (described below).
- BP08.2: LDU - Wolverlow Timbered Plateau Farmland (obscured from view and outside visual envelope of study - discounted).
- BP10a: LDU - Unenclosed Common (Bromyard Downs seen in distance)

3.7.13 LDU BP07.4 West Bromyard Timbered Plateau Farmland

A dissected, undulating hard rock plateau of mixed mudstone and sandstone with free draining brown soils. Tree cover comprises relic patches of ancient woodland, often associated with densely scattered hedgerow oak and streamside trees. The land use is mixed farming, the settlement pattern one of farmsteads and strings of wayside dwelling associated with a moderate to high level of dispersal and a small to medium scale field pattern.

- Predominantly mixed species hedgerows.
- Localised fruit trees in the hedgerows and traditional orchards.
- Localised enclosed common with regular fields.
- Almost all in Herefordshire with six field in Worcestershire.

Condition:

- Mixed farming of high intensity with generally intact field pattern locally declining.
- Generally poor condition boundaries.
- Moderate impact of new farm buildings.
- Distribution of ancient woodland is very localised.
- Localised poor representation of tree cover.

3.8 Local Landscape Character (Site Appraisal & Opportunities for Improvement).

3.8.1 No designations on site are likely to be constraint to the proposals for housing excepting the planning advice to ensure the development is brought forward taking the adjacent countryside setting into account by adopting a Landscape Led Masterplan. However, some landscape assets need to be retained as follows to maintain local distinctiveness:

- Semi matures Trees (T1,T2 & T3) at the junction of Panniers Lane with Hereford Road (A465).
- The wide verge in which these assets are situate needs to be retained.
- Some native species hedges should be retained and managed appropriately as indicated in Fig.8.
- The development site has limited opportunities and scope for landscape management on a macro scale but micro opportunities can be incorporated into the scheme which together can make a collative improvement to the site bio-diversity which is currently in poor condition.

3.8.2 The baseline assessment, outlined in preceding sections provides a robust description of the sites relatively late development (i.e. 1970's) and its poor overall condition now being described as an Urban 'Brownfield' site. The parcel sits incongruously within a rural setting which is open countryside making this site more conspicuous by virtue of its intensely developed nature with the PFS, Canopy, workshop and illuminated signs and spotlight all degrading the local landscape character. It isn't on its own as the parcels immediately north include some warehousing storage & light industrial uses (blacksmith's yard , scrapyard) and some poor quality residential housing. The Hope Family Centre whilst well designed is a detractor by virtue of its security lights that are considered a major detractor and nuisance as it causing light pollution on otherwise dark skies as does the lit forecourt of the PFS.

3.8.1 The study of the baseline assessment intention is to inform the design of the new development and its layout, form, massing, materials, colour and detailing to ensure the local distinctiveness and vernacular of the site sense of place (i.e. genius loci) is fully understood.

3.8.3 In this instance the architect's initial general arrangement (Appendix 5.0) was considered to be inappropriate in terms of massing and overbearing as a 'gateway' into Bromyard which is a rural market town and a less urbanised approach was encouraged by the Landscape Architect supported by the pre-application planning feedback calling for a Landscape Led Masterplan. A design meeting was held both on site and in offices in Bromyard to thrash out what needed to be altered to make the proposals less intrusive and more in keeping with the peri-urban and rural setting of the site.

3.8.4 Altering the projects layout and massing to respect the close proximity of the sensitive receptors and views from the open countryside, high status parkland and highly sensitive receptors(i.e. AV8 PROW) resulted in a new Feasibility

Sketch being drawn by K4 Architects (see Appendix 5.1) to record these discussions and agreements to make the general arrangement less imposing and respectful of the scale and grain of the locality, even given the site itself was found to be totally urbanised by its commercial use.

3.8.5 The Landscape Architect undertook an extensive walkover recording appropriate built form and features that reinforced the site local distinctiveness and these images were issued to the architects to convey the changes required whilst avoiding 'pastiche' design and direct facsimiles of other project in the locale. In reworking the layout the Landscape Architect & Ecologist liaised to incorporate features to soften and reduce the said impacts of the earlier layout by including the following elements:

- Moving the apartment element away from the junction to sit close to the Hope Family Centre to use the built form to mask the light spillage (containment of offsite light pollution to the south) and more sympathetic height transition across the site to give the landmark woodland space to continue to form a backdrop as a distinctive landmark feature..
- Moving the bulk apartment scheme away from the Landmark Woodland Plantation within the nearby Birchyfields unregistered landscape parkland.
- Placing the housing units with a smaller massing and scale leading to the sites apex as it narrows toward the junction.
- Reviewing the architectural materials and substituting some of the components for natural local stone to ensure the new built form harmonises with the local vernacular style and values found in the locality.
- The use of non-reflective glass to reduce light spillage.
- The use of guards to control light so it is direct downward where used to minimise spillage externally to improve the dark skies locally..
- Adjusting the architect parking arrangement and nudging the housing units northward closing them together to ensure the Tree Assets (i.e. T1, T2 & T3) root protection and canopy's were not impinged upon (development constraint).
- That the location of the soft landscape borders were placed in the most advantageous to thread native hedges through the development between the private housing unit and parking court of the apartments to encourage wildlife to both forage and migrate through the site enhancing connectivity.
- Including tree plant in the parking court with isles to soften the appearance of the parking court and using 'Urban Tree Soil' to ensure the trees planted thrive and reach maturity.
- Retaining H2, H3 and H4 although some facing up and management is proposed. H4 will need to be layed as per the example given in Fig .8 (Photograph taken near Little Frome Farm on B8 /AV1A).
- The inclusion of native species as per the landscape guidance to include fruit trees where possible.
- Devising with the ecologist and architect a n ecological treatment of the sub-station structure to include hedgehog housing / hibernacula, bat roosting opportunities using boarding typical of Bromyard outbuildings and a vented roof void for hibernation / roosting and nesting opportunity's for birds. The walls could also incorporate a invertebrate / bug wall to further augment the bio-diversity of the site.

- The use of untreated meadow turf throughout the development where lawns are proposed.
- Underseeing new hedgerows with a wildflower mix to increase wildlife value.
- The use of porous paving's to parking areas to ensure surface water is controlled at source using SUDS techniques.
- New hedges to be planted to the public domain side of close boarded fence enclosure to enhance the appearance of the proposals from the local landscape and to provide additional security.
- Making provision for hedge hogs to negotiate routes through the planting and by insertion of gaps in the gravel boards so they can migrate across the site and into rear gardens.
- Reuse of stone walls to face off the retaining structure behind the tanks laying this dry so as to provide nooks and crannies for further hibernacula opportunities and foraging.

3.8.6 The landscape guidelines give appropriate mitigation measures at a landscape scale whereas those outlined above are on a more micro level as the extent of the project is severely constrained by its current urban treatment and land available is at a premium. However, the PFS site which currently is a harsh predominantly hard surfaced plot as well as contributing to local visual intrusion by virtue of being on the elevated ridgeline and its illuminated signage and security lights, its white rendered elevations and canopy make it stand out in what is an otherwise predominantly rural location.

3.8.7 The removal of these detracting elements above approach making changes to the layout and adding in these various landscape elements / features has a calmativie impact improving the sites condition, making it less conspicuous in the landscape and ensuring it assimilates into the landscape as these various features mature and weather to have a patina in keeping with the local vernacular and distinctiveness

3.9 Landscape Character Assessment Summary

3.9.1 The Application Site falls within the Timbered Plateau Farmland and is currently considered to be a detractor having some visually intrusive features associated with it commercial operation as a PFS and range of workshops.

3.9.2 This limited appraisal has assessed that site within the LDU has an adverse impact of its environs being of low value, being in a poor condition being almost completely developed with little room or opportunity for natural landscape features. Those features worthy of note are listed in section 3.8 above, see 2nd paragraph and these should be retained where possible, protected and/or managed as indicated in relation to H4.

3.9.3 In demolishing most of what present for wholesale renewal of the site opportunities to soften the site impact on its local environment should be incorporated to lessen the said impacts identified including the removal of the light pollution emanating from the PFS signage and security lighting. The removal of the white canopy and building elevations will further reduce visual intrusion into

- the wider landscape and new materials should seek to lessen the presence of the new built form using appropriate materials (e.g. local stone & dark cladding).
- 3.9.4 Reclaiming local stone from demolished boundary walls should be re-used to faced off the dwarf retaining walls along Panniers Lane and close off returns.in forming the private drive access points with new native hedge species planting behind which is a typical detail in the locality.
- 3.9.5 The built form massing of the apartment block should be placed so that it creates a shielding effect of the security lighting within the Hope Family Centre on the northern boundary. This blocking off the source of light pollution will be beneficial in terms of the dark skies and for foraging bat species as well as reducing the nuisance to local receptors that see the PFS site & Hope Centre lighting from an otherwise unlit tract of countryside. This improvement is considered a **Beneficial** outcome of the sites redevelopment.
- 3.9.6 The existing landscape surrounding the site would benefit from the removal of the PFS and with sympathetic layout the relatively unspoilt countryside flanking the site to both the east and west would potentially be improved by development if the massing, form, general arrangement and selection of materials is more appropriate to the setting.

3.10 Visual Appraisal

The visibility of the Application Site has been established through both a desktop analysis of the surrounding area and by confirming on site the localised screening effect of the landform, vegetation and built form. The visual amenity appraisal has been undertaken in a two- staged process:

- **Stage 1:** established the likely extent of the Application Site's zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) as part of a field study, as shown Visual Impact Assessment the location of panoramas where identified (Appendix 6.00-6.07) and the visual receptors (**Table 1:**) that are visible from within the Application Site where identified; and
 - **Stage 2:** determined the visibility of the Application Site from the previously identified receptors (some discounted having no views), as was possible from within the public domain. This assessment of receptors is supported by a selection of photographs from a representative selection of Viewpoints; these are shown in Appendix 6.00-6.07 inclusive.
- 3.23 In order to identify the likely visibility from the visual receptors identified, entry has not been possible to a number of private properties set in grounds, the Landscape Architect has had to make a degree of informed judgement/assumptions of the potential views from habitable rooms within these properties from the nearest adjoining publically accessible place, such as roads or footpaths.

3.24 Stage 1

3.25 Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

3.26 The existing visibility of the site from the local landscape environs is demonstrated in a selection of panoramas shown in Appendix 6.00-6.07 inclusive. These give a fair representation of the inter-visibility of the site within the adjacent open countryside and the urban area of Bromyard but are not exhaustive and other may be possible given the site occupies a high ridgeline with prospects to the east (extensive -far ranging & mid distance)) and west (more enclosed mid-distance with occasional glimpsed view in the far distance). Appendix 1.2, assessed from within the Application Site as part of a field study Indicates the extent of views from the site and has allowed key viewpoints to be identified and visited in line with best practice (Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition- Purple Book). This assessment has concluded the following:

- Open views are possible of part of the site approaching it along Hereford Road (A465) for approximately 500m some from the southbound adopted footpath where it is present (Viewpoint 2).
- Some limited view from Pannier Lanes (B4214) north of the junction with Hereford Road are possible but these are curtailed by hedging, an Oak Tree and built development (light industrial, educational & residential) to the north and due to the lane curvature and profile the site is largely obscures from view.
- Some views from the North West from the A44 and its adopted footpath are seen (Viewpoint 4).
- Limited views from Pencombe Lane where it doesn't pass through hedge bank / cuttings over flailed hedges and through farm gate accesses and the isolated local residences & lodge (Viewpoint 3).
- Open views from the entire length of AV8 PROW are seen (Viewpoint 1).
- Open views from elevated locations to the east also include sections of WN7 and the minor road running between Green Lane, Ockridge to Upper Winslow. These are represented by the selection of Viewpoint 5 which typifies these more distant views due to the elevated location.
- Some minor glimpsed views being heavily filtered from Pencombe Lane from Crowel's Ash to The Sturts but these become obscured descending into the flood meadows / lower lying ground associated with Hackley Brook.
- Views south of the site from Panniers Lane junction with the Hereford Road (A465), the access to Birchyfields House Estate & Parkland and off the soft verges beside the highway with bollard crossing point running toward the B4214 are possible and the PFS and Canopy etc are clearly visible for approx. 150 -200 metres (see Viewpoint 6). No further view on the A465 main road after Cooper's Green occur as the highway curves and dips running down the contours which together with the plantations, copse and other residual element (Cottage & outbuildings etc.) totally obscures the site from view.
- The continuation of the B4214 at Cooper's Green has some partial

glimpsed views of the PFS emerging from the junction travelling north and from the soft verges. It is further along the B4214 north of Goodships Farm That some filtered views over flailed hedges are seen (SEE Viewpoint 7).

- Views through woodland from the upper slopes of PROW AV1A north of Burgess Farm (Spot height of 174) for approx. 100 linear metres or so is seen but is heavily filtered.
- A view from the country lane running from the junction on the B4214 (near Burgess Farm) down to Avenbury Court varies from being totally obscured to open aspect views. This is solely due to the absence of hedgerow as a significant length of enclosure hedge has been replaced with strained post and wire stock fence surmounted with barbed wire. This is not typical of the area as most hedges are intact (see Viewpoint 8).
- Some limited views off PROWS AV1A, B8 & B7 are possible in certain location associated with higher contours / vantage points or where gaps in the hedgerow occurs due to similar fragmentation (i.e. replacement with post & wire fencing) and where some management has occurred (i.e. layed section north of Little FROME Farm). Viewpoint 10 illustrates this type of view.
- Views off Avenbury Lane running from the A44 at Petty Bridge to Avenbury Court are possible but only from the higher points where hedges are flailed or through farm gates and/or the stile where PROW B7 joins the lane.
- Views off the PROW B7 east of the River Frome descending the contours from Avenbury Lane gives open aspect views of the site on the ridgeline. On the river flood meadow views are filtered to heavily filtered and where the footpath passes through the linear tree cover along the watercourse and the footbridge the site is obscured. An occasional glimpsed view may be seen but is not apparent if the viewer wasn't specifically looking for the development site (see Viewpoint 9).
- Views from Bromyard Downs are both filtered on the lower slopes but also open aspect from the sitting areas and upper slopes. The site is seen in a large expansive panorama over Bromyard as illustrated in Viewpoint 13).
- More distant views from higher vantage points can be seen to the south west at Hyde Wood with a half round timber rail fence makes provision for the walker (near spot height .122) to admire the prospect where the Birchyfields Plantation are a distinct landmark and the PFS is visible (a detractor in my professional opinion).
- View from Hill Oak lane, Hill Oak Farm (Receptor, occupant confirmed lights could be seen at night from her living room / quarters) afford further views at a greater distant and the illumination of the PTS, canopy and Hope Family Centre are particularly intrusive from this aspect in what is otherwise a dark night shy location (see Viewpoint 11).
- A further viewpoint at the access to Lower House Farm is also possible, albeit only upper story bedrooms are affected according to the farmer who wasn't bothered by the light pollution.
- Some minor glimpsed views are also possible from the B4220 Malvern Road (Viewpoint 12) but these are too far distant to be relevant and the impacts are likely to be negligible.
- Much further afield views from properties, footpaths and open High Hills of West Malvern including Table Hill, North Hill, Worcestershire Beacon on the western aspects are possible but the order of magnitude is consider so

slight as to be largely irrelevant and has been discounted (see Viewpoint 14 from Ebrington Road, West Malvern). The light pollution from the site and its immediate neighbour (i.e. Hope Family Centre) does however become visible at night and is more conspicuous as a consequence of this illumination and any reduction of such light spillage should be welcomed and/or containment of it to preserve the dark sky landscape associated with the eastern side of The Malvern's and in this respect the site and its neighbour are detractors with negative impacts.

3.27 Through identifying the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) the landscape consultant was able to target his walkover within a defined study area and has taken into account the most significant viewpoint as outlined in section 3.26 to make an assessment of the developments visual impacts.

3.28 Stage 2

3.29 The visibility of the Application Site in the overall view from the identified visual receptor points are described in the following sections. The existing visibility, distance and value from the visual receptors are set out in the following table below which is not necessarily exhaustive as some properties could not be accessed being remote or within large parcel with private drives. However an assessment from point close to these potential receptors has been made using a degree of professional judgement to be able to write up this report.

3.30 The findings of this will inform the sensitivity of the surrounding areas visual amenity to the Scheme Proposal (original design and subsequent variations taking on board landscape observations & comments). In order to make this process manageable the landscape assessment is supplemented with several representative views (i.e. Viewpoints) have been identified to illustrate the sites intervisibility (appearance) from these selected key vantage points. These 'Viewpoints' are appraised as a representative sample of those areas with views of the site & the proposed development. Descriptions are of the developments said impacts in order that mitigation measures can be devised. These Viewpoints demonstrate the Application Site and the Scheme Proposals relationship to the surrounding landscape context and visual receptors identified, as shown in Appendix 7.00 to 7.05 (not definitive or exhaustive).

3.31 Note:

The appraisal is intended to represent the range of views seen from a variety of receptors/ locations to enable the impacts of the said development to be adequately described. It does not mean all views and every receptor has been identified but that the order of impacts from those described below are a fair representation of what might be seen and that the said impacts of the development are fairly represented in accordance with best practice and in accordance with 'Guidelines for Landscape And Visual Impact Assessment' 3RD Edition (The Purple Book). The assessment in Table 1 reflects the amended design impacts after the architects adopted the Landscape Led Masterplan approach and altered the design to substantially reduce the said order of visual impacts which should now satisfy the previous concerns of Herefordshire Council.

| Receptors (R) | Sensitivity | Magnitude of Change in Short term | Magnitude of change after 5 years | Impact on visual amenity in the Short term | Impact on visual after 5 years |
|--|--------------------|--|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| R1 - Cooper's Green Cottage | Medium | Negligible | Negligible/None | Minor | Minor/None |
| R2 - Southbound Verge A465 | Medium | Moderate/Slight | Slight/Negligible | Moderate to Moderate /Minor | Moderate / Minor to Minor |
| R3 - North Verge A465 | Medium | Moderate | Moderate /Slight | Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R4 - Junction opposite Coopers Green Cottage B4214 | Low/Negligible | Slight/Negligible | Negligible/None | Minor to Minor/None | Minor/None to None |
| R5 - A465 Hereford Road | Low / Medium | Substantial /Moderate | Moderate | Major/ Moderate to Moderate | Moderate to Moderate / Minor |
| R5 - Junction of Panniers Lane with A465 | Low/ Medium | Substantial /Moderate | Moderate | Moderate | Minor |
| R7 - Adopted F/P on A465 (metaled-west) | High/ Medium | Substantial /Moderate | Moderate | Major/ Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R8 - Hope Family Centre | Medium | Substantial | Substantial /Moderate | Major/ Moderate | Moderate |
| R9 - Ashfield Road (Junction) | Medium | Slight | Negligible | Moderate / Minor | Minor |
| R10 - Bedroom /Upper storey views of several residential units, off A465 / Ashfield Road | Medium (Bedrooms) | Slight/ Negligible | Negligible | Minor | Minor/None |
| R11a - Adopted F/P opposite Keepmoat Regeneration Site | High / Medium | Negligible | Negligible/None | Minor/None | None |
| R11b - Adopted F/P west of A465 at Lamp Column 629. | High / Medium | Negligible | Negligible/None | Minor/None | None |
| R12 Adopted F/P off A465 as | High / Medium | Negligible/None | None | Minor/None | None |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| path into Ashfield Housing noted. | | | | | |
| R13 - Ashfields House, Hereford Road. | Medium (Bedroom / 1 st floor only) | Negligible | Negligible/None | Minor/None | None |
| R14 - Stanmir Bungalow | Medium / Low | Negligible/None | None | None | None |
| R15 - Greenfields Bungalow | Medium/ Low | Negligible/None | None | None | None |
| R16 - Clive Watkins Blacksmiths Yard & Unit | Low (Industrial) | None | None | None | None |
| R17 - Layby in Pannier Lane | Medium | Negligible | Negligible/None | Minor | Minor/None |
| R18 - Panniers Lane B4214 north of junction Adopted Road | Medium/ Low | Slight/ Negligible | Negligible/None | Minor | Minor/None |
| R19 - Panniers Lane verges | Medium | Moderate/ Slight | Slight | Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R20 - AV8 PROW | High | Moderate | Moderate/ Slight | Major/ Moderate | Moderate |
| R21 - Access to Birchyfields (Private Layby) | Medium | Slight | Slight/ Negligible | Moderate / Minor | Minor |
| R22 - Private drive to Birchyfield (Gated) | High/ Medium | Negligible | Negligible/None | Moderate /Minor | Minor/None |
| R23 - Section of AV8 with glimpsed view of Malvern Hills | High | Substantial /Moderate | Moderate/ Slight | Major to Major/ Moderate | Moderate to Moderate / Minor |
| R24 - AV8 view at Field Gate (centre of parcels / fields). | High | Moderate | Slight | Major/ Moderate to Moderate | Moderate to Moderate / Minor |
| R25 - AV8 at stile onto Pencombe Lane | High | Slight | Slight/ Negligible | Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R26 - Birchyfield Lodge | High/ Medium | Slight / Negligible | Negligible | Moderate /Minor | Minor/None |
| R27 - Pencombe Lane & Verges | High/ Medium | Slight | Slight/ Negligible | Moderate | Minor |
| R28 - Branbryn | High/ | Slight/ | Negligible | Moderate | Minor |

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| (Bungalow, formerly as The Golden Rule) | Medium | Negligible | | / Minor | |
| R29 - Field gateway of Panniers Lane | High/ Medium | Slight | Slight/ Negligible | Moderate | Minor |
| R30 - Layby on Pencombe Road (western verge only) | Medium | Slight/ Negligible | Negligible/ None | Moderate / Minor | Minor / None |
| R31 - Corbett's Orchard | High/ Medium | Slight/ Negligible | Negligible | Moderate / Minor | Minor |
| R32 - Chanctonbury | High/ Medium | Negligible / None | None | Minor | None |
| R33 - Northfields Cottage | High/ Medium | Negligible | Negligible/ None | Minor / None | None |
| R34 - Eastbound Carriageway of A44 for 250m or so until 30m from Upper Hardwiche Lane | Medium | Moderate/ Slight | Slight/ Negligible | Moderate / Minor | Minor/ None |
| R35 - Adopted F/P A44 from Keep Hill to 30m before reaching Hardwiche Lane | High | Moderate | Moderate/ Slight | Major/ Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R36 - B4214 south of Coppers Green junction. | High/ Medium | Moderate/ Slight | Slight | Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R37 - Verge on B4214 (100l/m) | High | Moderate | Moderate/ Slight | Major/ Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R38 - Goodship Farm Access of B4214 | Medium | Slight/ Negligible | Negligible/ None | Moderate / Minor | Minor / None |
| R39 - Farm access (gated) on B4214 for approx.100l/m | High/ Medium | Moderate | Moderate/ Slight | Moderate | Minor |
| R40 -AV1A PROW at B4214 | High | Slight | Negligible/ None | Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R41 - AV1A gap intervening vegetation only 25 l/m or so. | High | Slight | Negligible/ None | Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R42 - Stile at | High | Negligible/ | None | Minor | Minor/ |

| | | | | | |
|--|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| AV1A & AV1B (PROW) | | None | | | None |
| R43 - Junction AV1A/AV1B to B6 (PROW) | High | Moderate/ Slight | Slight | Major / Moderate to Moderate | Moderate / Minor to Minor |
| R44 - Timber King Yard, Little Frome | Low (Business) | Negligible/ None | None | None | None |
| R45 - Crest of Hillock along F/P AV1A before Little Frome Farm | High | Slight | Slight/ Negligible | Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R46 - Little Frome Farm (public domain) | Medium | Slight | Slight/ Negligible | Moderate / Minor | Minor/ None |
| R47 - AV1A/B8 Herefordshire Trial (HT) & Bromyard Walks (BW) | High | Slight | Slight/ Negligible | Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R48 - B8 PROW Gap in hedge.(HT&BW) | High | Moderate / Slight | Slight | Major/ Moderate to Moderate | Moderate to Moderate to Minor |
| R49 - F/P B8 (PROW) Partial glimpsed views -30 steps & 58steps (HT&BW) | High | Moderate / Slight | Slight | Major/ Moderate to Moderate | Moderate to Moderate to Minor |
| R50 - Riparian F/P B7 (PROW) West side of River Frome (10-20l/m only). | High | Slight | Slight/ Negligible | Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R51 - Farm Gate, Avenbury Road by Riding Stable | High/ Medium | Slight/ Negligible | Negligible | Moderate / Minor | Minor |
| R52 - Avenbury Road (300m) fragmented Hedge/Missing. | High/ Medium | Moderate | Moderate/ Slight | Major/ Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R53 - Cottage No.1 Avenbury Road (Semi) | Medium | Slight | Slight/ Negligible | Moderate / Minor | Minor |
| R54 - Cottage No.2 Avenbury | Medium | Slight | Slight/ Negligible | Moderate / Minor | Minor |

| | | | | | |
|---|--------------|------------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| Road (Semi) | | | | | |
| R55 - Farm Gate Stables | Medium | Moderate | Moderate / Slight | Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R56 - Poplar Cottage, Avenbury | Medium/ High | Moderate/ Slight | Slight | Moderate / Minor | Minor |
| R57 - Avenbury Road (adopted highway from B4214 to Avenbury Lane) | Medium/ High | Moderate | Moderate/ Slight | Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R58a,b,c - The Calf Cote, The Hop Kilns & Avenbury Court | Medium | Negligible/ None | None | Minor/ None | None |
| R59 - The Barn, Avenbury | Low | None | None | None | None |
| R60 - Farm Shed, Avenbury Grange outbuildings | Low | Negligible | Negligible/ None | Minor / None | None |
| R61- Avenbury Grange | Medium/ High | Slight | Slight/ Negligible | Moderate | Minor |
| R62 - Avenbury Grange from gateway (public domain only) | Medium/ High | Negligible/ None | None | Minor/ None | None |
| R63 - Farm Gate, Avenbury Lane (Corrugated Outbuilding) | Medium/ High | Substantial / Moderate | Moderate/ Slight | Major / Moderate | Moderate to Moderate / Minor |
| R64 - High points along contour of Avenbury Lane (Minor Road) | Medium /High | Slight/ Negligible | Negligible | Moderate / Minor | Minor |
| R65 - B7 (PROW) at stile & farm gate/pull in(Field Access) | High | Moderate | Moderate/ Slight | Major/ Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R66 - St. Mary's Church (site of) | High | Negligible/ None | Negligible/ None | Minor/ None | None |
| R67 - Avenbury Lane (Farm Gate on high spot101/contour | High/ Medium | Moderate | Moderate/ Slight | Major/ Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R68a - Pool Hall | Medium | Moderate/ Slight | Slight | Moderate / Minor | Minor |
| R68b Church | Medium/ | Moderate/ | Slight | Moderate | Minor |

| | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Banks | High | Slight | | / Minor | |
| R69 - view off minor road near Hyde Farm / Wood. | Medium/ High | Moderate | Moderate/ Slight | Moderate | Moderate / Slight |
| R70 - Gate to Hyde Farm (Derelict Building) | Medium | Slight / Negligible | Negligible | Moderate / Minor | Minor |
| R71 - Hill Lane at Hill Oak Farm | Medium | Moderate / Slight | Slight | Moderate to Moderate /Minor | Moderate /Minor to Minor (if light is controlled) |
| R72 - Hill Oak Farm (For Sale) | Medium (Business) | Slight | Slight/ Negligible | Moderate / Minor | Minor/ None |
| R73 - Hill Oak House/Cottage (For Sale) | Medium/ High (Residential) | Slight | Slight/ Negligible | Moderate / Minor | Minor/ None |
| R74 - Access track to Lower House Farm | Medium/ High | Slight | Slight/ Negligible | Moderate / Minor | Minor/ None |
| R75 - SB8 (PROW) & passing place on minor road | High | Moderate | Moderate/ Slight | Major / Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R76 - Lower House Farm | Medium | Slight/ Negligible | Negligible | Moderate / Minor | Minor |
| R77 - B4220 Drovers Barn near. Silkcroft Farm, Malvern Road | Medium | Negligible | Negligible/ None | Minor | Minor/ None |
| R78 - Fairview, (Minor Road east of site) | Medium | Negligible | Negligible/ None | Minor | Minor/ None |
| R79 - Oak Cottage (New) | Medium | Negligible | Negligible/ None | Minor | Minor/ None |
| R80 - F/P WN7 (PROW) | High | Slight | Slight/ Negligible | Moderate | Moderate /Minor |
| R81 - Crowell's Ash / Lowerway to Pencombe Lane | Medium | Slight/ Negligible | Negligible/ None | Moderate /Minor | Minor/ None |
| R82 - Halfway House to Sturts Ash | Medium | Negligible/ None | None | Minor/ None | None |
| R83 - Rough Mintridge Farm | Medium/ High | Slight | Slight/ Negligible | Moderate to Moderate | Moderate /Minor to Minor |

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | | | | / Minor | |
| R84 - Bythan | Medium/ High | Slight / Negligible | Negligible | Moderate / Minor | Minor/ None |
| R85 - Lodore Farm | Medium/ Low | Negligible | Negligible/ None | Minor | Minor/ None |
| R86 - Burley | Medium/ High | Negligible | Negligible/ None | Minor | Minor/ None |
| R87 - Bromyard Downs (Minor Road) | Medium | Moderate | Moderate/ Slight | Moderate | Moderate / Minor |
| R88 - Bromyard Downs (Common) | High | Moderate | Moderate/ Slight | Major/ Moderate | Moderate to Moderate / Minor |
| R89 - Bromyard Downs (Picnic Sites) | High | Moderate | Moderate/ Slight | Major/ Moderate | Moderate to Moderate / Minor |
| R90 Property at Ebrington Road, West Malvern | High/ Medium | Negligible | Negligible/ None | Moderate / Minor | Minor/ None |
| R91 North Hill, West Malvern | High | Negligible | Negligible/ None | Moderate / Minor | Minor/ None |
| R92 Table Hill, West Malvern | High | Negligible | Negligible/ None | Moderate / Minor | Minor/ None |
| R93 Worcestershire Beacon, (Malvern Hills AONB) | High | Negligible | Negligible/ None | Moderate / Minor | Minor/ None |

3.32 Table 1.0 – Summary of Impacts on Visual Amenity (Receptors)

3.33 The selected viewpoints is taken from a selection of representative points (receptors) that illustrate the full extent and magnitude of the proposals visual impacts. These Viewpoints are described in the following sections to assist in understanding what is visible from these key vantage points (as identified during the LVIA walkover whilst the local vegetation was in a dormant condition). The likely impacts of the scheme on what viewers might see if they are looking directly towards to the site has been assessed. Given that some views are expansive panoramas and some are at a considerable distance this is likely to lessen the order of the said impacts of the proposals, especially as they become assimilated into the views over time. Any landscape mitigation will continue to mature for several years as will intervening vegetation and together with the local landform some views will not be possible in the future and when the vegetation is not dormant (i.e. views are obscure with vegetation is in full leaf).

3.34 The following table (Table 2.0) describes the Viewpoints selected as illustrated in Appendix 6.01-6.07 being located on the Viewpoint Plan in Appendix 6.00.

| Viewpoint (VP) | Viewpoint | Grid Ref | Approx. distance from site | Receptor (see Table 1.0) |
|-----------------------|---|--|---|---------------------------------|
| VP1 | PROW AV8 (entire alignment) | SO 64186 54048 to SO 64399 53802 | 0.005 km to 0.038 km | R20, R23, R24 & R25 |
| VP2 | Existing Adopted F/P & Hereford Road(A465) | SO 64766 54180 to SO 64504 53862 | 0.010 km to 0.601 km | R11a, R11b & R12 |
| VP3a&b | Pencombe Lane | SO 64239 54100 | 0.370 km | R27 & R29 |
| VP4 | A44 & Adopted F/P to the West of Bromyard. | SO 64344 54383 to SO 64096 54440 | 0.580 km to 0.740 km | R34 |
| VP5 | Minor Road, Winslow | SO61609 54090 to SO 61697 53770 | 2.840 to 2.900 km | R78 & R80 |
| VP6 | A465 Hereford Road on approach to Bromyard past Cooper's Green | SO 64384 53458 to SO 64434 53742 Image taken at: SO 64421 53688 | 0.010 km to 0.033km | R3 |
| VP7a&b | Grass Verge on B4214 | a) SO 64431 53282 & b) SO 64471 53225 | 0.450 km to 0.640 km | R37 |
| VP8a | Lane to Avenbury Court | SO65386 52587 | 1.560 km | R52 |
| VP8b | Lane to Avenbury Court (Fragmented Hedge) | SO65511 52633 | 1.550 km To 1.690 km | R57 |
| VP9a,b,c | B7 (PROW) from Stile on Avenbury Lane, Embankment, and Floodplain (cultivated) besides the River Frome up to the Pedestrian Bridge. | a) SO 65713 53660 b) SO 65689 53743 c) SO 65657 53735 | a) 1.290 km b) 1.270 km c) 1.240 km | R50 |
| VP9d | Avenbury Lane | SO 65912 53325 | 1.420 km | R67 |
| VP9e | Avenbury Lane | SO 65732 53915 | 1.300 km | R64 |
| VP9f | Avenbury Lane | SO 65722 54015 | 1.340 km | R63 |
| VP10 | AV1A & B6 (PROW) | SO65312 53860 | 0.880 km | R48 |
| VP11a&b | Hill Oak Farm & House | SO 67472 51375 | a) 3.880 km b) 3.870 km | R72, R73 & R74 |

| | | | | |
|------|------------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| VP12 | Drovers Barn on B4220 | SO68934 52397 | 3.860 km | R77 |
| VP13 | Bromyard Downs | SO 67147 55225 (a - Common) and SO 67014 55110 (b - Minor Road) and SO 66959 55285 (c - Picnic Areas) | a) 3.005 km b) 2.890 km c) 2.880 km | R87, R88 & R89 |
| VP14 | Ebrington Road, West Malvern | SO76484 46885 | 13.860km | R90, R91, R92 & R93 |

3.34 Table 2.0 – Viewpoints representing visual envelope (VP1-14 inclusive)

3.35 Selected Viewpoints Descriptions:

3.36 Viewpoint 1 (VP1):

a) The Viewpoint and its Users

This viewpoint is taken along the length of the Public Right of Way (PROW) AV8 which cross open pastureland running between Pencombe Lane & Panniers Lane walking in a south easterly direction (See Appendix 6.00 & 6.01).

b) Existing View

Currently the PFS, Canopy and Workshops are seen from the PROW over the agricultural hedges which enclose these parcels of pastureland. The degree of what is seen does vary due to the local topography as Pencombe Lane (154.800m) is at a lower level than Panniers Lane (166.857m), a difference of some 12.057m or so. This rise partially obscures the site from view the more distant the viewer is away from Pannier Lane & the site that occupy the ridgeline in the local landscape. Footpath AV8 has an western aspect and the combination of the height difference and agricultural hedges hides part of the existing building on site but the upper storeys, roofscape & canopy are visible even from the lowest point when crossing the stile off Pannier Lane.

c) Magnitude of Change

The architects initial proposals seen from this viewpoint would have a **Substantial/Moderate** impact as the roofscape of individual dwellings would be seen with the remainder set back adjacent to the Hope Family Centre with the Apartment element being set at the highest point on site and obscuring views and competing with the parkland trees to Birchyfields as a local dominant landmark with an extremely 'urban' appearance. The Choice of dark bricks exacerbated the potential visual intrusion by making the built form proposed even more conspicuous.

Walkers using the adopted footpaths would be subject to a greater degree of impact as they are more sensitive to such dramatic change and the initial proposals would have a more 'urbanising' impact on what is a rural context and the bulk of the apartment would obscure views of the Malvern Hills in the far distance emerging from AV8 PROW.

d) **Effects on Visual Amenity**

The construction of the apartment element in the initial general arrangement (Appendix 5.0) would have had a **Major/Moderate adverse** effect on visual amenity as the bulk of the apartment would detract from the local setting being more visible due to its height and due to the 'urban' materials selected which are more appropriate within a town centre or location that is not peri-urban in its landscape. Whilst the site is 'urban' its location is strongly influenced by the extensive views to the eastern and western aspects of the site and this has not been taken into account.

e) **Landscape Led Approach (reduction of impacts by avoidance, reduction & mitigation):**

The development would have a far less effect on Visual Amenity if the architects layout was adjusted to place the bulk of the apartments next to the Hope Family Centre and leave the apex of the site on the junction with the existing Trees (T1 -T3) with the smaller scale of the individual housing units to lessen the order of visual effects to an acceptable order of impact (see Appendix 5.1 Landscape Led Masterplan approach as recommended by the LPA). By providing a more generous open aspect /arrangement at the junction the said impacts could be avoided and reduced from **Major/Moderate** to **Moderate/Minor** but might involve some redesign of the layout to achieve this outcome.

The production of a Feasibility layout in advance of undertaking a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has necessitated through a positive dialogue with the project architects to arrive at the sketch layout (Appendix 5.2) to refine the design thus avoiding the **Major adverse** impacts and this arrangement allow for the partial restoration landscape features as part of a considered scheme. In my professional opinion the order of impacts even given the 'low' sensitivity of the site being previously developed is worthy of improvements that will remove current visual detractors associated with the PFS site and improved the local views from the wider landscape by shielding the Hope Family Centre's light pollution, removing the over urbanised appearance by the introduction of a landscape scheme that restores the local distinctiveness. This accepting that the site is already 'urban' will ensure the site has a **Moderate/Minor** outcome overall but with some **beneficial** consequences (i.e. partial screening source of light pollution).

The sensitive receptor (AV8 PROW) will experience a change in the view but this is likely to be more pleasing to the eye than the current situation/ outlook and certainly preserve the glimpsed views on emerging from the stile onto Panniers Lane with close board fencing being concealed behind the perimeter hedges proposed around the development and the use of natural stone should allow the

scheme to become assimilated into the local scene over a relatively short time.

3.37 Viewpoint 2 (VP2):

a) The Viewpoint and its Users

The photograph (Appendix 6.01) shows various views along the Hereford Road (A465) leaving Bromyard toward the site in a south westerly direction and is what the adopted highway users would see (Pedestrian & vehicular users).

b) Existing View

The residential housing (Ashfield Estate) on leaving Bromyard is past on the left and minor glimpsed views of the site are seen albeit partially obscured by the local landform as the road dips towards the PFS site in the far distance. As the viewer approaches the PFS passing 'Greenfields' the site becomes more apparent as the agricultural hedges flanking the A465 guide the sightline to the signage, canopy and forecourt of the PFS. This is seen set against the distinctive 'estate woodland' of Birchyfields Parkland (unregistered) on the skyline that conceals the site from southern aspects. On the west side of the road leaving the 40 mph speed limit the east views are open countryside with extensive panoramic views over the River Frome Valley, Avenbury and beyond with the Malvern Hills being seen in far distance on the skyline some 8.7km away at the nearest point. The view to the east is a mixture of urban development including Ashfield House, Greenfields, A housing development site, Queen Elizabeth School (Grounds), two modern bungalows, some industrial warehousing / light industrial units & the Hope Family Centre before reaching the PFS.

The footpath does not continue as far as the PFS stopping up diagonally opposite the Hope Family Centre. The paraphernalia associated with the commercial retail outlet of the PFS and the illuminated sign with security lighting appear in an otherwise rural context and are slightly incongruous detracting from the setting and is a source of light pollution at night.

c) Magnitude of Change

The demolition of the garage and its associated signage would be a **Beneficial** impact but the architects initial feasibility layout would potential have some **Substantial adverse** magnitudes of change if left unchallenged. The placing of the apartments on narrowing apex of the site would obscure views of the landmark trees at Birchyfields by virtue of the massing and form of the proposals (see Appendix 5.0) missing an opportunity to reduce the 'urban' treatment of the external envelope of the site which would be unacceptable due to the landscape setting even though the sites description in its LDU as 'urban' with 'low' sensitivity to change this is too simplistic in that the development being brought forward should include measures to remediate the site and improve its poor condition.

d) Effects on Visual Amenity

The comment in VP1 equally applies where the apartment block should not be

placed on the apex of the site where Hereford Road joins with Pannier Lane as it would obscure the estate woodland that forms part of the unregistered Parkland of 'Birchyfields' the former being a distinctive local landscape feature.

The current feasibility layout would have had a **Major/Moderate** effect on the site visual amenity as the 'Urban' influence of the apartment element would dominant the termination of views being a too abrupt transition in my professional opinion and particularly alien to the local landscape grain which sees the urbanised appearance peter out rather than making an abrupt visual full stop in the landscape. The urban selection of materials would have reinforced this alien appearance and would detract from the local character & distinctiveness of this location. It is accepted that the current PFS itself is a detractor but the re-development of the site should seek to improve the relationship of the built form to its surrounding in a more sensitive way.

e) **Landscape Led Approach (reduction of impacts by avoidance, reduction & mitigation):**

By re-arranging the elements proposed the apartment block being located against the Hope Family Centre would partially obscure the new residential unit from views from this aspect. The smaller form and massing of individual house unit and reinstatement of hedges around the perimeter of the site will reduce the said impacts to **Minor** accepting change is proposed and that the site has a 'low' sensitivity the landscape treatment over time will lessen this impact to an acceptable degree (**Negligible/ None**).

Tree planting on the frontage and parking court will soften the appearance and the smaller form of the individual houses will more readily become assimilated into the scene (i.e. wayside cottages are a local characteristic) especially where local building materials are selected as advised (see Fig.4.0, 5.0 & 8.0 recommended by the landscape consultant).

3.38 Viewpoint 3 (VP3a & 3b):

a) **The Viewpoint and its Users**

These two views are taken off Pencombe Lane (Minor Road) which doesn't have an adopted footway but does have a partial grass verge to the western side.

b) **Existing View**

The local landform as described in VP1 partially obscures the site from view as Panniers Lane is some 12m or so lower than the site and this topography means views of the building elevations of the PFS & Garage buildings are partially screened with the agricultural hedges on Panniers Lane contributing to this to some extent.

Where the agricultural hedges are intact along Panniers Lane the site is obscured where they are not flailed. The flailed section of hedge, fragmented sections and gateways provide more open views of the site which occupies the ridge on the

skyline looking south east.

c) **Magnitude of Change**

The development will be seen through the gaps in the linear vegetation from those private residencies along Kennels Lane mainly from upper storey rooms. The housing proposal would have a **Moderate** impact being a localised change but is capable of being mitigated. The reduction of the magnitude of change to **Minor** following some revision of the design to set units back from the junction of Panniers Lane and the rear gardens of the housing units and screen hedge around the perimeter would further soften the overall appearance once established. The use of natives species will only contribute to the assimilation of the new development into the landscape and provides for migration, foraging improving connectivity between the western and eastern parcels which are in essence open countryside on the whole.

d) **Effects on Visual Amenity**

The feasibility layout due too the placing of the massing of the apartments would have had an adverse impact on the views from the aspect competing with the distinctive 'estate woodland' associated with the Birchyfields Parkland It is considered that a **Moderate** effect on properties visual outlook would occur if this scheme was brought forward but in modifying it these effects could be significantly reduced. The apartment on the corner would mean no step from countryside to urban transition would be maintained and the significance of the woodland on the ridge would be diminished reducing its dominance and thus harming local distinctiveness.

e) **Landscape Led Approach (reduction of impacts by avoidance, reduction & mitigation):**

Altering the distribution of massing not only screens the apartment from view in terms of bulk, massing and appearance from this aspect using the Hope Centre to lessen the order of visual impact, the effects are lessened as the smaller scale individual houses allowing the landscape to pass through the site and by choosing appropriate materials are in keeping with the local vernacular.

The choice of local stone and the smaller massing of the individual houses allows the woodland to continue to dominant the skyline as the distinct landmark and the screening of the units with hedging around the outside of the enclosed gardens means the whole appearance is softened which reinforces local distinctiveness.

The removal of the white building elevations, roof and PFS Canopy & illuminated signs are seen as a **beneficial** outcome as is the partial screening of the light pollution from the Hope Family Centre. Overall by adopting the recommendation in the landscape led approach the impacts would be relatively **Minor**.

3.39 Viewpoint 4 (VP4):

a) **The Viewpoint and its Users**

Viewpoint 4 is taken off the footpath along the northern side of the eastbound carriageway of the A44 looking in a south eastward direction. Walkers using this footpath (underused as partially overgrown) would see the site in the far distance whilst car drivers might get a glimpsed view as Traffic seems to be travelling at the national speed limit at this point.

b) **Existing View**

The view looks over the valley of Hackley Brook meadows and associated valley which is incised into the landscape flowing into the River Frome encircling Bromyard. Within this panorama the site is partially seen through intervening landscape elements including copses, agricultural hedges and the odd farm / wayside cottage & bungalows on Pencombe Lane. Hedges and woodland partially filter views but about 300 linear metres of path and roadway does have views of the top of the Garage outbuilding which are only conscious due to their elevational treatment (i.e. being rendered white or the corrugated sheet roofing).

c) **Magnitude of Change**

The magnitude of change from this viewpoint is considered to be **Moderate** and the longer term impact is likely to be **Moderate/Slight** if the original design were to be permitted. The magnitude of change would be broadly similar to VP3 but the view would be in a larger panorama by virtue of both distance and elevation so slightly reducing the overall magnitude from this viewpoint.

d) **Effects on Visual Amenity**

Placing the apartment element on the corner as stated in VP3 would have a **Major / Moderate** effect on visual amenity which would reduce over time if permitted.

e) **Landscape Led Approach (reduction of impacts by avoidance, reduction & mitigation):**

As previously stated by re-organising the layout the impacts of the proposals can be avoided by moving the apartment block to sit immediately adjacent to the Hope Family Centre and allowing the smaller housing units to be juxta opposed with the estate woodland plantation which is a distinctive feature in the landscape.

By allowing the built form to step down on the ridgeline and using local stone within the elevations and native hedges to screen the boundary of the site the order of impacts would be reduce to an acceptable degree (i.e. **Minor**).

3.40 Viewpoint 5 (VP5):

a) **The Viewpoint and its Users**

This view represent the panorama from the minor road near Ockridge, Winslow

over flailed hedges that are broadly similar to views off WN7 PROW on the lower topography being some 2.8-2.9km distant from the site on the edge of the study area. .

b) **Existing View(s)**

The foreground is occupied by cultivated arable land on 'Timbered Plateau Farmland' (typical of local landscape character type) albeit that the fields have been aggregated together (i.e. agricultural intensification) causing the loss of intervening hedgerows making the landscape more open than in other locations. The openness is less characteristic and degrades local distinctiveness leaving wooded copses and plantations in a vast cultivated landscape that is ecologically poor and unsustainable and potentially why nitrates in this location are problematic.

A consequence of this openness the site is seen in the mid distance just below the skyline but is only conspicuous due to its white rendered elevations, roofing material and the PFS canopy and the light pollution emanating from the security lights and from the neighbouring site (Hope Family Centre). The secondary school and other parts of Bromyard off Panniers Lane are also seen including the light industrial warehousing and playing fields that make the site an outlier of 'urban' use within a more rural open countryside appearance.

c) **Magnitude of Change**

The magnitude of change is considered to be **Negligible** from this aspect and distance even given the open views available as the site is a tiny element in an expansive panoramic view..

d) **Effects on Visual Amenity**

The effects on visual amenity are considered to be **Minor** but by adopting a landscape led approach could be reduced to **Minor/None** especially where the source of light pollution in a dark sky can be shielded. Using the architect's original feasibility layout this opportunity would be missed to improve the local dark skies objective and remediate the sites poor condition.

e) **Landscape Led Approach (reduction of impacts by avoidance, reduction & mitigation):**

The feasibility layout should be adjusted to shield the source of local light pollution from the site itself & the adjacent neighbour (Hope Family Centre) by placing the apartment massing so as to prevent light spillage into the otherwise dark sky in this location.

3.41 Viewpoint 6 (VP6):

a) **The Viewpoint and its Users**

South of the PFS forecourt and junction of Panniers Lane with the Hereford Road

(A465) the main road approaching Bromyard has no footpaths but a splitter island with illuminated / reflective bollards is seen presumably to accommodate a crossing point for walkers onto the southbound verge as the northbound verge is unsuitable as it has steep embankments and is difficult to negotiate.

b) **Existing View(s)**

The PFS occupies the left hand side of the view looking northward beyond the steep embankment to the west side of Hereford Road. The verge on the eastern side is access by using the bollarded crossing point (splitter island refuge) as the southern carriageway verge to the north is too narrow for a footpath.

On the west side the plantation surrounding Birchyfields Parkland obscure the landscape from view whereas to the east the hedge on top of a bank surmounting the verge only allows distant views of the higher landscape and the River Frome meadows are largely obscured from this specific location. The housing off Ashfield Drive is seen in the far distance as is the Bromyard Downs.

The illuminated signage of the PFS, its forecourt and canopy are in full view as is the glass showroom and upper storey of the workshop buildings being partially filtered by T1-3 and T8.

c) **Magnitude of Change**

The loss of the PFS on the frontage of this prominent site entering Bromyard is likely to have a **beneficial** outcome if the correct scheme is advanced. Unfortunately the scheme with the apartments on the leading / southern part of the site from this aspect would generate a **Moderate** magnitude of change which would be considered to be intrusive.

d) **Effects on Visual Amenity**

The change from a rural agricultural landscape in an 'Urban' land use without a sensitive transition would have **Moderate** impact on visual amenity from this location as traffic and pedestrians (walkers) would see an urban use replaced with an even more dominant built form which no doubt would be of a high architectural quality but given the surrounding is inappropriate as it would dominate what is otherwise a rural setting. The proposals would be **Major Adverse** if it wasn't by virtue that the site is previously developed and of a low sensitivity

The effects on visual amenity would be incapable of mitigation in the architect original feasibility layout and would be unacceptable in this peri-urban location as the massing and form of the apartment scheme envisaged would be alien to the immediate surrounding akin to the bows of a ship forcing its way into the landscape. An over dominant form with 'urbanising' characteristics is not acceptable in this local as it would significantly affect local distinctiveness and the parking on the frontage would have an adverse impact of existing tree assets on the junction of the Hereford Road (A465) with Panniers Lane (B4214).

e) **Landscape Led Approach (reduction of impacts by avoidance, reduction & mitigation):**

Setting the apartment element back along the site northern boundary against the Hope Family Centre would significantly reduce the imposition of the built forms massing scale and reduce its dominance in the location making it less visually intrusive.

Masking the views of the apartment element of the proposals with the housing units designed as 'wayside cottages' not only reinforces local distinctiveness, maintains views and increases opportunities for connectivity through the development but it also maximises the opportunity to significantly screen off the light pollution source which currently degrades the dark skies in this location.

By setting the housing units beyond the tree constraints these assets can be retained on this important approach into Bromyard and the use of local building stone in the elevation will assist with the development integration with the local setting by using materials that enhance local distinctiveness.

Furthermore, by incorporating native species hedges around the sites perimeter these once established will soften the development impact to an acceptable degree and is considered to be an improvement on what is a very urbanised parcel at present.

By adopting this landscape led recommendation the architect's new layout in Appendix 5.3 and the Landscape Layout in Appendix 5.4 should enable the competent authority to support the proposals with impacts much diminished to **Minor** magnitude which will further reduce over time as the landscape scheme matures.

3.42 Viewpoint 7 (VP7):

a) **The Viewpoint and its Users**

South of the site the B4214 AT Cooper's Green junction continues in a south, south easterly direction. It is only walking or driving in a north, north easterly direction that the site is glimpsed over the flanking hedgerows and only then when intervening hedges are not present or are flailed affords views of the PFS site.

There are no footpaths along the B4214 and verges are intermittent but on the northbound carriageway views are apparent being more conspicuous due to the security lighting and PFS Totem.

Where farm gates and flailed alignment of hedges occur views can be seen but where hedges are not managed in this way views are obscured. The rolling nature of the landform and intervening copse & wooded slopes in the dingles and the largely intact hedgerows means the site disappears from view as one moves away from the site.

b) **Existing View(s)**

Glimpsed views are partially filtered (VP7A) and heavily filtered (vp7b) view over flailed hedges. Where hedges are not managed in this way views are less obvious or not apparent as the height of the vegetation impairs views until a greater elevation is attained.

The views are not obvious to the casual viewer but if a person stood still and took in the prospect the PFS, illuminated Totem, Canopy can be identified. The security lighting both on site and to the neighbouring site north of the proposed development do draw the viewers' attention but are obscured when the vegetation is in leaf from most vantage points but not all.

c) **Magnitude of Change**

Views due to the local landform, increasing distance and the filtering by intervening hedgerows are considered to be **Moderate** to **Moderate/Slight** magnitude of change.

The scheme over time would have a maturing landscape scheme that in my professional opinion from these viewpoints would be less significant if the apartment were set back from the junction.

d) **Effects on Visual Amenity**

The effects on such distant views are likely to be **Major/Moderate** and as the developments landscape treatment mature this could be reduce to **Moderate/Minor** if the apartment building is set out as per the initial feasibility layout which is considered to be unacceptable as it competes with the landmark wood opposite within the Birchyfields parkland.

e) **Landscape Led Approach (reduction of impacts by avoidance, reduction & mitigation):**

Setting the apartment element back significantly reduces the order of impacts and the smaller scale houses arranged in a 'wayside cottage' arrangement would reinforce local distinctiveness rather than destroy it from this aspect as the units would more readily assimilate into the scene whereas the apartment would not due to their form, massing, scale and colour. The other advantage in setting them back is that the apartment element will substantially screen the light pollution source to the north which when viewed from a dark lane such as this is a **benefit** and helps to protect the dark skies that are a distinctive feature of this part of Bromyard and its local countryside being largely unlit.

The impacts adopting a landscape led approach would be **Slight**, and impacts on visual amenity would be **Minor** in my professional opinion.

3.43 Viewpoint 8 (VP8a & 8b):

a) **The Viewpoint and its Users**

These two images are taken from the lane leading off the B4214 that runs down to Avenbury Court. The users are likely to be walkers and motorists.

b) **Existing View**

The view in VP8a is through the fragmented hedge that runs on the northern, north, north-west side of the lane having an elevated position at the B4214 junction (near Burgess Farm) and in parts the hedge is so fragmented or is completely missing (see VP8b) that it affords views over the adjacent incised Dells and rolling landscape where the PFS site can be seen by virtue of its white rendering to building elevations, its canopy, illuminated Totem and security lights although a significant proportion emanates from the Hope Family Centres site to the north of the target site.

This is more conspicuous during the winter period as the intervening woodland is dormant and the lighting is not obscured and that in an otherwise dark sky landscape the lighting is considered to be a **Major/Moderate** detractor.

c) **Magnitude of Change**

The magnitude of change is considered to be **Moderate to Moderate/Slight** as the scheme apartment scheme shown in the feasibility would be more conspicuous by not being set back and its 'urban' form would be seen through the wooded canopies for a substantial period of the year hanging the sites rural character with an urban imposition.

d) **Effects on Visual Amenity**

Given the openness along the northern side of the lane the sensitivity of the receptors with an elevated viewpoint are likely to have a greater effect and that walkers using the quiet lane are the most sensitive to change / effects. Without stepping the apartment element back **Moderate** effect are anticipated during the winter/dormant period of the year only.

e) **Landscape Led Approach (reduction of impacts by avoidance, reduction & mitigation):**

The reduction in visibility of the 'urbanised' feasibility scheme necessitates the apartment element of the proposals to be set back obscuring the lighting off the Hope Family Centre which would be **beneficial** to this dark lane landscape.

The smaller scale, form and colours of the housing units with elevation partially in natural stone would mean the development would assimilate into the landscape and would be almost completely obscured from view. The **Moderate/Minor** impacts would be reduced to **Minor/None** by adopting the landscape led general arrangement from these viewpoints.

3.44 Viewpoint 9 (VP9a, b & c):

a) The Viewpoint and its Users

The images shown in Appendix 6.04 illustrate the B7 PROW that is well used by walkers running between Bromyard and Avenbury Lane. These views are from the western side of the River Frome and its riverside meadowland which are cultivated and under crop albeit partial beaten down by attrition. The footpath runs up the west facing bank / scarp to join Avenbury Lane where access is via a stile.

Walking north westwards from Avenbury Lane towards the pedestrian footbridge over the River Frome views can be seen off to the west where the site occupies the ridgeline being dominated by the large trees forming the boundary to Birchyfields parkland as part of its 'Reptonian' woodland largely a modern plantation although the ecologist confirm the presence of bluebells a small portion of this may be 'ancient' but in my professional opinion given the uniformed age class it is largely plantation of the 18th & 19th centuries (see regression survey).

b) Existing View

The viewpoints at the stile onto Avenbury Lane is elevated (VP9a), whilst VP9b is descending a small escarpment / river embankment where the river meadows are under cultivation (degraded) and form the lower lying land adjacent to the River Frome (9c). Walker traversing the path in a north west direction would see these views to the west whereas walkers in the opposite direction might not unless they stop and look toward the site through the vegetation that is a linear feature along the course of the riparian river bank on both the eastern and western sides that heavily filters views from VP9c but the view open up on the more elevated locations as illustrated in Appendix 6.04 (VP9b) and at the stile (VP9a).

c) Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change will be **Slight to Negligible** due to the intervening distance and the filtering by the streamside vegetation on the lower ground, whereas the said impacts will increase as the viewers position is more elevated and the ridgeline becomes more apparent as the PFS site occupies the skyline.

d) Effects on Visual Amenity

The effects on visual amenity are likely to be **Moderate** reducing to **Moderate/Minor** as the feasibility layout removes part of the light pollution source but then as with other aspect the apartment element competes with the estate woodland within the Parkland of Birchyfields being a local dominant landscape feature / landmark. The architects were encouraged to alter the layout following feedback from pre-application advice and after an initial meeting on site with the Landscape Architect and a new layout was devised (See Appendix 5.2).

e) **Landscape Led Approach (reduction of impacts by avoidance, reduction & mitigation):**

The architects revised layout taking into account the sensitivity of receptors and advice given by the landscape architect has resulted in setting back the apartment element to the site northern boundary as previously stated.

This re-arrangement takes on an added significance from this Viewpoints direction toward the site as the massing of the built form is reduced and doesn't compete with the wooded escarpment at Birchyfields. This is particularly evident in Viewpoint 9b from the footpath B7 (PROW) which is a highly sensitive receptor Having open views of the ridgeline. Setting the apartment back onto the northern boundary will not shield the security lighting from the neighbouring site but it does minimise the apartment elements appearance from this aspect.

Setting the housing units on the southern part of the site and by incorporating materials that respond to the local vernacular and colours of materials found in the local vicinity of the site reinforces local distinctiveness as 'wayside cottages' are a feature of this landscape type.

By adopting the landscape recommendation the magnitude of impacts is reduced to a **Negligible** level of change which should be supported as the effects are acceptable and that over time the development will largely be obscured or become assimilated into the scene.

3.45 Viewpoint 9 (VP9d, e & f):

a) **The Viewpoint(s) and its Users**

Avenbury Lane runs from the A44 to the River Frome vehicular Bridge and whilst from the majority of the lane where hedges are intact views are obscured or heavily filtered some views are seen by walkers who use the lane, horse riders and motorists being part of a Bromyard Leisure route.

b) **Existing View**

Viewpoint 9d is a view afforded by a farm gate at an high point as the lane meanders along the contours within what is a large tract of rolling landscape mostly enclosed with intact agricultural hedges with local farmstead and small manor houses many accessed along long unmade tracks. Within this view looking obliquely west north west the site is seen occupying the ridgeline but is some 1.29 km away. The edge of the plantation (estate woodland) of Birchyfields is the dominant landscape feature on the skyline and the existing PFS buildings are separate from it and subordinate. The large scale farm barns (Timber Yard) are also seen in a mixed arable landscape with pastureland. Overhead cables on telegraph poles are an urbanising feature.

Viewpoint 9e further along Avenbury Lane afford views toward the site from over flailed hedges but the site is so heavily filtered as to be almost completely obscured. It is only the lighting that draws the viewers' attention to the site when

trees are dormant from this location. No view in summer would be possible. the view appears flattened as it is taken at a low point along Avenbury Lane.

Viewpoint 9f in contrast to 9e is taken from a much higher contour looking through a farm gate as the hedgerows nearer to the A44 on the western side of the Avenbury Lane (no verges) are largely intact. A glimpsed view of the ridgeline and Birchyfields perimeter woodland on the escarpment is seen and the PFS is clearly visible albeit it forms a small part of a panoramic view being 1.34km away which diminishes the impact to some degree as the site is a small component in the overall view.

c) **Magnitude of Change**

The magnitude of change for VP9d is Moderate/Slight but would be improved if the proposed layout set the apartment element back and located the housing units within the apex of the site (i.e. southern part) as from this direction they would be read as wayside cottages that are a typical characteristic of this landscape type.

VP9e has **Slight/Negligible** magnitude of change but would be improved by the omission of security lighting making it less conspicuous albeit this is a temporary view during the dormant part of the year. By placing the apartment scheme to the southern part this would increase the magnitude of change as this new element would be seen due to its height form and massing.

The view through the gate at VP9f would have a Moderate magnitude of change as the apartment building would be clearly visible whereas setting it back onto the northern boundary it would be obscured. The impact by not following this is assessed as being **Moderate** due to the intervening distance. An urban block below the wooded escarpment is considered to be an inappropriate element in what is largely a rural scene in open countryside.

d) **Effects on Visual Amenity**

The effects on visual amenity given the open views are largely rural in character would have an adverse impact on this local character and is considered to be Major/ Moderate from VP9d, Moderate/Minor from VP9e and Major/Moderate if the general arrangement doesn't accept the landscape assessment finding and recommendations.

e) **Landscape Led Approach (reduction of impacts by avoidance, reduction & mitigation):**

The architect's revised layout reduces the order of these impacts having taken the advice of the Landscape Consultant into account setting back the apartment element so it is less conspicuous and less damaging from this set of viewpoints.

The apartment block is virtually obscure by intervening landscape elements from these viewpoints and the housing unit whilst clearly visible will more readily

assimilate into the scene being designed with the local vernacular in mind (i.e. materials, form and landscape characteristics of this landscape type).

The said impact would be reduced to a **Minor** magnitude and over time these would become negligible as the mitigative measures become established and softens the appearance of the scheme even given the intervening distance it is the more elevated viewpoints that experience the greatest order of effects.

For the avoidance of doubt the impacts will be considerably less with the removal of the light pollution and the removal of the white canopy, white rendered building elevations and PFS canopy and may be considered **beneficial**. However, from this aspect the Hope Family Centre light spillage into the dark skies will remain an issue but is beyond the applicant's gift to resolve.

3.46 Viewpoint 10 (VP10):

a) The Viewpoint and its Users

This view is taken from AV1A where it meets B6 both PROW's approximately 0.88km from the site. The footpath & farm track are also the Leisure Route known as the Herefordshire Way (Long Distance F/P) and also is part of the walking routes around Bromyard (Bromyard Nature Trials) all being highly sensitive receptors.

b) Existing View

The view through is taken through a gap in the hedgerow at a low point on the track from Bromyard to Little Frome Farm where a ditch crosses the footpath (culvert) and some localised waterlogging occur in an arable field planted with winter wheat.

The rolling topography which is typical of the Landscape Character Area is evident and linear vegetation along the ditch course is seen threading itself up the gradient with agricultural hedgerows (some fragmentation is evident) dividing fields into separate parcels in the mid-distance of the view.

On the skyline the plantation of the woodland estate of Birchyfields & its Parkland are clearly visible on the ridge line being a dominant local landscape landmark. The PFS site is seen beneath this wooded feature being partially filtered by the intervening vegetation in one of the many dingles typical in this location. However due to the development site occupying the ridgeline but backed up by the 'parkland' it is only noticeable due to its colour (i.e. rendered white elevations, white canopy & illumination).

As with other viewpoints from the east.

c) Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change will be **Moderate/Slight** becoming **Slight** from this location.

d) **Effects on Visual Amenity**

The effects on visual amenity from the footpaths are considered to be **Major/Moderate to Moderate** due to the high sensitivity of the receptors. .

e) **Landscape Led Approach (reduction of impacts by avoidance, reduction & mitigation):**

The removal of the white buildings, canopy and illuminated paraphernalia associated with the existing PFS forecourt and commercial use of the site would be **beneficial** from this sensitive receptor. By varying the design setting the apartment block back to the northern boundary the proposals impact would be substantially reduce as the height form and massing would not partially obscure and compete with Birchyfields Parkland that is the main termination of this view on the skyline.

By arranging the housing along Hereford Road as 'wayside cottages' this would be less intrusive and reinforce local distinctiveness by using materials of the same colours seen in the local vernacular so that the new dwellings fit in with the landscape character. By modifying the proposal incorporating hedges and tree planting the magnitude of change would be lessened to **Slight** and over time the development would be inconspicuous in stark contrast to the existing PFS. The visual effects would also be **Minor** if the landscape recommendations are adopted.

Note: that the architects have worked in a collaborative way and have taken on board the landscape architects observations and comments and therefore the scheme being brought forward is now considered acceptable by adopting this landscape led approach.

3.47 Viewpoint 11 (VP11a & 11b):

a) **The Viewpoint and its Users**

The viewpoint is located on Hill House / Hill Oak Lane and the Receptor R73 a private house associated with a farmstead which has full open views of the site and the occupier confirmed that the light pollution from both the PFS & Hope Family Centre were a nuisance. The light pollution is in an otherwise dark sky in a rural landscape.

Walkers and motorist use the lane which has a steep incline and a farm gate has a prospect over the River Frome valley below and the site in the far distance.

The lane is flanked by intact hedges and has no grass verge or very narrow margins for walkers albeit the lane is a quiet rural road.

It was noted that the farmhouse at Hill Oak is currently for sale. Views from habitable rooms, upper floor bedroom and an external patio looking out into the valley were noted.

b) **Existing View**

The view through the farm gate gives a large panoramic view of the River Frome Valley and Bromyard. It is apparent how far out of the town the site is from this viewpoint and the site is seen in a totally rural context.

The PFS site is seen in the far distance on the ridgeline and can be made out next to the ever dominant Birchyfields Parkland as a key local landmark. Whilst the site is a small (tiny) proportion of the overall view its illumination at night makes it very conspicuous and is a local annoyance to some existing residents.

The higher land at Bredenbury and Ockridge are seen in the far distance from this viewpoint meaning the ridge occupied by the PFS is not on the skyline.

c) **Magnitude of Change**

The magnitude of change is likely to be **Slight** to **Slight/Negligible** and with time the restoration of landscape features as part of the proposals this could be reduced to **Negligible/None** but relies on the landscape led scheme being adopted as the apartment on the southern part of the site would increase the order of impacts to an unacceptable degree.

d) **Effects on Visual Amenity**

The effects on visual amenity are considered to be **Moderate/Minor** and will become **Minor/None** as the development becomes assimilated into the panorama being a small element of the overall view. The removal / shielding of the lighting source to some extent is considered to be beneficial but from this aspect it will not be fully obscured. This is a matter for the LPA to consider which is beyond the scope of this report.

e) **Landscape Led Approach (reduction of impacts by avoidance, reduction & mitigation):**

As previously stated in other Viewpoint descriptions the placing of the apartment element on the southern part of the site would even at this distance introduce an urbanising element that doesn't sit comfortably besides the plantation woodland of Birchyfields. Setting the apartments back giving adequate clearance space between the landscape feature and its form & mass is desirable and reduces the said impacts to an acceptable degree (i.e. **Slight** magnitude & **Minor** effects) once the tree planting, hedges and the new build has a weathered patina.

3.48 Viewpoints 12 (VP12):

a) **The Viewpoint and its Users**

This viewpoint was taken from opposite Drovers Barn on the B4220 looking over a flailed agricultural hedgerow. The road had no footpath at this point and the verges were minimal not suitable for use as a footpath. Views from the dwelling

would be across the road as it is located on the north eastern side of the busy Malvern Road.

b) **Existing View**

The view over the road and flailed hedge reveals a panoramic vista that is occupied by the rolling hills of mixed arable & pastureland with the dark soils noted. A dingle tributary of the River Frome runs downslope away from the viewpoint the land rising in the mid distance to form a ridgeline surmounted with woodland probably associated with a farmstead / small local manor house (Pool House) beyond which the River Frome valley is obscured in dead ground.

In the far distance the ridgeline is seen with the PFS and Bromyard being clearly seen. The Birchyfields wooded estate is a distinct feature with this panorama and Little Frome Farm is also visible below the Top Garage site. The site is not on the skyline as higher ground at Bredenbury and beyond forms the far distance in the view.

c) **Magnitude of Change**

The magnitude of change is considered to be **Negligible** given the site is so far distant and is seen within a large expansive view. The loss of illumination is likely to be beneficial but from this aspect but no 'shielding' benefit of the light pollution from the Hope Family Centre is possible due to the orientation of the site within the view.

d) **Effects on Visual Amenity**

The effects on visual amenity are considered to be **Minor to Minor / None** once the mitigative planting & landscape proposals become established given the site is a single component in a view comprising a mosaic of landscape elements.

e) **Landscape Led Approach (reduction of impacts by avoidance, reduction & mitigation):**

The apartment block focussing in on the site would be best placed to the northern boundary to ensure it doesn't compete and/or obscure the Birchyfields plantations and the foraging opportunities along the woodland are not interrupted by built form placed in the wrong place. This would lessen impacts even from this far distance and the housing element would be read as wayside cottages in this views making the magnitude of change **Negligible** and the visual effects **Minor/None**.

3.49 Viewpoints 13 (VP13a,b & c):

a) **The Viewpoint and its Users**

The viewpoints illustrated in Appendix 6.06 & 6.07 illustrated that views of the site are seen from the minor road (Receptor 87), the Downs Common (Receptor 88) & the Picnic Sites / Sitting Areas (Receptor 89) all having similar elevated views

over the River Frome Valley and its flanking ridgelines on which Bromyard is situate.

The Bromyard Downs are common land being open and elevated and as such are used as a leisure resource including walkers, tourists and local visitors (e.g dog walkers, picnickers, courting couples, lunchtime breaks & people exercising, jogging and relaxing etc.), making the receptor high sensitive to change.

b) **Existing View**

From this angle and orientation the site is seen in the mid to far distance with the Birchyfields plantations, forming the Parklands boundaries beneath which the white workshop buildings and PFS canopy can be made out. The Hope Family centre is also clearly visible as is much of Bromyard Town and from this orientation the site proximity to the town is foreshortened albeit it is still on the periphery of the built up area. The significant gap between Greenfields and the site is less obvious but the agricultural field to the east of the site do separate the site from the Ashfield's housing estate on the far mid distance in the views.

The ridgeline on which the PFS is situated is not on the skyline from these elevated vantage points but the rising grounds at Bredenbury, Ockridge and beyond (hazy far distant) form a backdrop to the Birchyfields estate woodland under which the development site is seen being subservient to its dominant presence.

c) **Magnitude of Change**

The magnitude of change is considered to be **Moderate** and by re-organising of elements to take landscape recommendation in account the impacts is assessed as being **Moderate/Slight** after five years following development.

d) **Effects on Visual Amenity**

The development site is clearly visible within these viewpoint and is considered to be **Moderate** (Minor Road), **Major/Moderate** (Common) & **Major/Moderate** (Picnic / Sitting Areas).

The former is a road where viewers are potentially having to concentrate ofn passing traffic and the some of the roads alignment is screen by wooded escarpment slopes of the Downs but some open stretches were gaps in the woodland afford views over the River Frome Valley and Bromyard can be appreciated. The Common and Picnic/Sitting areas are where the viewers are less occupied with other activities (i.e. road safety, driving etc.) and the ability to concentrate and focus on the panoramic view gives the receptor at these locations a slightly higher sensitivity to change in my professional opinion.

The more sensitive receptors at these viewpoints see the site in a panoramic mosaic landscape and the PFS site is a single element on the edge of Bromyard

being only conspicuous due to its colour (i.e. white elevational treatments) and its illumination at night with security lighting and totem signage would be clearly visible to the observer.

e) **Landscape Led Approach (reduction of impacts by avoidance, reduction & mitigation):**

From these viewpoints the bulk of an apartment scheme would read as being juxtaposed to the landmark woodland and would be an urbanising feature in a rural view on the peri-urban fringe of Bromyard. By placing the apartment against the Hope Centre the bulk of the apartments form and mass would be obscured by the existing Hope Family Centre thus minimising visual effects and the housing would be in keeping with the Landscape Character of the LDU's & Land Cover Parcels.

The development arranged as shown in Appendix 5.3 & 5.4 would have significantly less impacts overall and the removal of the white built form and reduction in lighting would be **beneficial**.

The magnitude of change would be **Slight** and the visual effects **Minor** by adopting the landscape recommendations in this report.

3.50 Viewpoints 14 (VP14):

a) **The Viewpoint and its Users**

The viewpoints from the Malvern Hills some 13.86 km away are beyond the study area and have been largely discounted by the landscape architectural consultant as being too far distant and the site appearing 'tiny' in the large panoramic views from elevated ground to be worthy of detailed consideration even given the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty high status and high sensitivity to landscape change and visual effects.

The users are Leisure Walkers / Ramblers, Tourists and Residents on a vast tract of unenclosed elevated landscape (High Hills & Slopes) but without optical aids the impacts are considered to be de-minimus.

b) **Existing View**

Whilst views of the Malvern Hills ridgeline from the site and the footpath network around Bromyard is possible the designated and protected resource is beyond the Malvern Hills AONB quotidian landscape and not considered to be an issue that would prevent determination of this form of development from proceeding.

It is worthy of noting extensive views from residences at West Malvern is possible (i.e. Ebrington Road) and the 'high hill and slopes' that have a western aspect including Table Hill, End Hill, North Hill and Worcestershire Beacon. The wide panoramic view is a mosaic of interlocking ridgelines, field and is so large and extensive in scale that the site would appear as a 'minutus' element completely inconspicuous in a very expansive view. But for the illumination that

draws the viewers' attention to it at dusk, overnight and at dawn being an unwelcome isolated light source in an otherwise dark sky location.

Whilst some reduction by removal of the PFS facility will improve matters the light pollution emanating from the remaining site to the north is a matter that is beyond the scope of this report and beyond the gift of the application to resolve.

c) **Magnitude of Change**

The magnitude of the proposed development given the feasibility layout is **Negligible to None**.

d) **Effects on Visual Amenity**

The effects on visual amenity are **Minor to None**.

e) **Landscape Led Approach (reduction of impacts by avoidance, reduction & mitigation):**

The partial shielding of light pollution and removal of white elevations and part of the light source are considered to be beneficial but the sites development is not capable of removing the adjacent light pollution from the night sky which is the most conspicuous attribute seen from these far distant views.

Whilst the architects have moved the apartment away from the woodland plantation of Birchyfields Parkland and estate reducing the light spillage into the local countryside the views from the Malvern Hills are likely to continue to see the Hope Family Centre security light following development. This is an issue that is not within the applicant remit to resolve but by adjusting the form of development some improvements have been previously described but it is unlikely that from these viewpoints this issue will be completely resolved.

4.0 Scheme Proposal (Amended Design)

4.1 The initial scheme devised by the architects failed to take into account the impacts on the landscape resource and following pre-application feedback K4 Architects approached Greenway Landscape Architects to review their proposals and undertake an LVIA / walkover to assess the magnitude of change and the visual effects.

4.2 Given the planning feedback and the Landscape Architects finding in conducting a detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment it became apparent that a different approach was required. A site meeting and a subsequent meeting in offices in Bromyard took place to thrash out what needed to be altered to make the development proposals acceptable to the LPA given the various development policies and the protection of the landscape as a resource.

4.3 The Initial Architects Proposals (Appendix 5.0) were reviewed and modified with the Landscape Architect issuing a preliminary drawing on how to substantially reduce the magnitude of impacts on the landscape resource *see Appendix 5.1).

The principal architect at K4 took the recommendations on this sketch into account at the 'thrashing out concept' meeting producing sketch in Appendix 5.3 as the design was developed / varied to be more sensitive to the setting of the 'urban' parcel.

- 4.4 Further comments and feedback in a constructive multi-disciplinary design team working approach led to the Architects issuing the revised layout in Appendix 5.3.
- 4.5 The Landscape Architect further refined the architectural layout by ensuring the housing elements did not imposed on the site existing tree assets (T1-T3 inclusive) and that both existing hedgerows and new hedgerows were worked into the layout to maximise mitigation (screening) of the development from adjacent areas and to augment connectivity, foraging and migration improving the sites bio-diversity (detailed discussions with ecologist were held).
- 4.6 Detailed discussions with the highway and drainage engineers were also held to ensure the mitigative elements (i.e trees in inter car park tree pits) to soften the appearance of the scheme whilst using species of local provenance to augment local distinctiveness would be included and to ensure their viability.
- 4.7 The Landscape Strategy Plan / Landscape Proposals Plan indicates how the existing hedges will be managed, new hedges used to enclose the developments boundaries interfacing with open countryside and the protection of existing tree assets (See Appendix 5.4).

5.0 Appraisal of Effects

- 5.1 The effect of the Scheme Proposal is quantified by predicting the magnitude of the change in the effects on the previously identified landscape resource and its character / resilience to change and those visual receptors that may be affected at key stages of development and the establishment phase once occupied:
 - construction effects, which includes change in land use (commercial to residential) with effects created by the construction works (short term) and the absence of mitigation measures in the short term as these take time to lessen the order of impacts well they become established;
 - occupation effects during the first year following development, which includes the recently implemented landscape proposals in the medium term; and
 - occupational effects, which includes fifteen years and beyond from the first day of occupation where the effects have been reduced or eliminated as a result of any landscape proposals in the long term.
 - The impacts on landscape features including hedgerows (Hedgerows Regulation 1997) and veteran trees and/or existing site assets.
 - The guidelines given in the Landscape Character Areas albeit these are too large for this parcel a number of small mitigative details can contribute in a cumulative way to reversing the sites poor condition to a limited extent.
 - That the mitigation of those landscape elements retained and/or designed are managed to ensure the reach maturity and make a positive

contribution to the schemes final appearance in the locality enhancing local distinctiveness rather than detracting from it.

5.2 The visual impact appraisal does not attempt to predict the visual effects of seasonal changes throughout the year but describes the 'worst case' position in terms of the views for the receptors (i.e. in the winter the trees would have lost their leaves being dormant).

5.3 Sensitivity of the Landscape Character and Visual Receptors

5.4 Landscape Character Receptor's Sensitivity

5.5 The Application Site is located within LDU BP10b and is classified as 'Urban' parcel with much of the site having been previously developed. The site is considered to have a '**Low**' sensitivity to change, presumably because any changes if well considered would have a positive impact and outcome..

5.6 The site is also considered to be 'Brownfield' development in that the land is both previously used and potentially contaminated as the PFS was established prior to much of the strict controls on this type of commercial use coming into force. As the existing occupants wish to retire the benefits of their. 'Grandfather clause' or 'grandfather use rights' are non-transferable to other parties. In such an instant the site would have to undergo redevelopment irrespective of who inherits or purchases the site. Redevelopment is seen as a mechanism to deal with the sites various issues as an 'enabling' development to pay for its remediation and restoration including landscape improvements to make the site less 'urban' in appearance given that this use is well established and unlikely to relinquished.

5.7 No allocation for housing on the site is contained within the Local Plan and therefore the housing proposal is a speculative 'windfall' site. The planning consultant's reports cover this issue which is beyond the scope of this LVIA.

5.8 Most residential receptors are sufficiently distant as to be largely unaffected by the development although a varying degree of views are possible most are from inhabitable parts of the properties (i.e. upper storey bedrooms) with a few notable exceptions along the minor road to Avenbury (Wayside Cottages such as R53,R54, R56 , R58A,B,C, & R61). Whilst other farm manors may have views (i.e. R68a, R68b,R72 etc.) these are sufficiently distant as not to be affected by demolition & construction activities. Some may benefit from the reduction in light pollution and the colours of the new build where local stone and dark cladding is used making the new built form less conspicuous particularly where the landscape led arrangement is adopted. .

5.9 Generally, the most sensitive receptors are well contained due to the local landform and deeply incised dingles that are well wooded screening the development from view and the order of impact overall is considered to be 'low' If the site is developed in a sensitive way responding to the above findings and the recommendations to make the apartment element less dominant setting thi back adjacent to the Hope Family Centre so that impacts with the adjacent rural landscape character flanking the site on all side excepting to the northern

boundary are taken into account as advised by the LPA's planning officer.

5.10 The landscape architect has illustrated a range of features found in the local built form with its distinctive vernacular (i.e. use of stone elevations and dark cladding) and other bespoke elements (see Fig.4 & 5 in particular).

5.11 The local footpath network has some views but these are limited to where footpath passes farm gates, fragmented hedges and/or from key vantage points on higher ground. These are described in the Viewpoints as a representative sample in all directions and a variety of distances from the site to produce a well-considered assessment from different types of receptor.

5.12 Given that the site itself including the roadside verges only extends to 1.33 acres or so landscape restoration on a large scale isn't possible this cover parcel being already extensively developed and very 'urban' limits opportunities to mitigate the development but even on such micro 'land cover parcels' improvement to the site condition are essential if climate change is to be combated amongst other issues in the locality but it has to be acknowledged some limitations are imposed by the condition the site is currently in. I have separated the mitigative requirements out from the enhancement as given below:

a) Demolition (Benefits):

- The removal of the white buildings elevations or decoration in a less obtrusive colour is recommended.
- The removal of lighting causing spillage into dark skies.
- The removal of the PFS Totem and signage.
- The removal of workshop buildings and the light coloured roofing.
- Tree protection of the assets to be retained and/or managed to include T1, T2, T3, H2a (with some management as enabling works), H3 and H4 (to be laid as enabling works prior to commencement of development).

b) Mitigative Requirements:

- The apartment building should be relocated to the northern boundary to reduce its dominance within the scheme and its adverse impact on the locally dominant woodland feature associated with Birchyfields Parkland.
- The apartment should not dominant views from various aspect within the open countryside flanking the site to the east and west.
- The apartment scheme should be used to shield the light pollutions from the adjacent site as far as is possible substantially reducing the impacts of light spillage into local dark skies associated with this landscape character type (Timbered Plateau Farmlands).
- That new built form should all use materials that respect the local vernacular and are informed by the colour special planning guidance to ensure new development harmonises with the local landscape character type in which it is proposed. Whilst urban in this instance the contextual setting is Timbered Plateau Farmlands as advised by the LPA.

- The existing trees T1, T2 & T3 on site should be retained as LPA assets and given sufficient space to enable them to reach full maturity and ultimate spread without conflicting with new built form.
- The new housing element shall be moved out of the canopy spread & Root Protection Areas (RPA's) to conserve this existing landscape resource that is complimentary to trees of the same species on the opposite side of Panniers Lane forming a 'gateway' into Bromyard and 'Birchyfields' as an unregistered 'Parkland'.
- The existing native hedges on the sites boundaries should be retained and/or managed that is consistent with local husbandry (i.e. refer to Fig.8, which is particularly relevant to the retention of Hedge H4).
- The housing along Hereford Road should appear as wayside cottages as this is a typical characteristic of this landscape type.
- That the smaller scale housing be located so as not to inhibit bats foraging along the woodland edge of the plantations surround Birchyfields.
- That new tree planting includes species of local provenance to include fruiting species that are typical of the local landscape character (e.g. Plums, Damsons, Apple, Pear).
- That the parking court is sub-divided with planted isles so that the parking doesn't become a visual detractor.
- That the inter car park tree pits are installed to ensure trees reach full maturity and that the substrate and soils in which they grow are remediated and or isolated from ground conditions / contamination and that both gaseous exchange and hydration are provided.
- New hedges and or alignment of vegetation should be devised as to separate the housing and apartments to soften the development appearance but in such a way as to avoid attrition and/or to ensure this landscape treatment has every chance of establishing over time
- Such hedges shall be of native species to encourage migration of species, foraging and improve connectivity between the cover parcels of land to the east and west of the site.
- That surface water is contained in a SUDS scheme included porous paving to parking bays to control run off from the site.
- That the existing hedges are regularly maintain and faced up, lopped and topped (i.e. 'A' framed) to ensure they continue to screen the development from views in the wider landscape.
- That planting contains a percentage of native species to encourage wildlife, birds, bees, butterflies and foraging of other species.

c) Enhancements:

- That the parking courts are soften with landscape amenity planting to make the site a pleasant environment for new residents.
- That a bespoke sub-station building incorporates hibernacula opportunities too include barge boarding, roof vents, old tiles and voids for hibernation.
- That the demolition of low retaining wall stone is set aside and reused to face of rotten timber retaining walls being laid dry to provide further opportunities for refuge.
- Provide a footpath connection to the local footpath network and widen if

possible.

- 5.12** Through assessing and identifying the value and susceptibility to change of the local landscape resource it has been possible to devise bespoke recommendations to improve the landscape cover parcels value which has a 'low' sensitivity to change but its immediate neighbouring parcels are likely to be more sensitive particularly from those receptors that are highly sensitive such as the Public Right of Way (PROW) network (i.e. AV7, AV1A, B7 & B8, WN7).

The landscape character heavily influenced by the open countryside and the site being juxtaposed with an unregistered landscape Parkland although the Listed Birchfields House itself is not considered to be a receptor itself. The site occupying what is a ridgeline of the River Frome catchment is seen from the surrounding landscape as described in this report but is also heavily filtered and substantially screened making it feasible to devise landscape strategy to develop the site with Minor impact overall. These **Minor** impacts are offset by the opportunities to improve the site poor condition and status as outlined in section 5.12 above. When these have been delivered, maintained & managed the development would have a **neutral** impact overall with some **beneficial** outcomes but relies on the landscape recommendations being incorporated into the development.

5.13 Visual Receptor's Sensitivity

Table 1.0 has established the identified visual receptor's sensitivity although this is not exhaustive it is a fair representation of the type of magnitude and visual effects associated with the proposals and that these can be reduced by following the landscape mitigative measure given in section 5.12 b).. This has been based on each visual receptor's susceptibility to change in and the value attached to the particular views experienced at each one of these locations. As a proportionate study the Viewpoints only have been described in detail and illustrated as a typical representation of the type, range, distance and order of magnitude and visual effects exhibited by receptors selected as Viewpoints.

5.14 Effect during Demolition and Construction Phase: Short Term (0 – 1 years)

During the demolition and construction phase of the proposed residential development plant and apparatus will be brought into the area. This will be located within a site compound to minimise effects on the location..

All trees and hedges to be retained will be fenced off to protect them from construction activity as the urban use of the site has increased their local value in maintaining a remnant of the rural appearance which links to the site past use (pre 1970's). Whilst it is accepted as part of this study/report the areas baseline will be changed from a 'commercial urban' use to a 'residential urban' use the re-use of 'brownfield land / previously used land' for development is sequentially preferable to building on new 'greenfield' sites.

Given the sites poor current condition albeit set in a peri-rural location which is dominated by the adjacent agricultural landscape the retention of limited

features that remain will give both maturity to the landscape scheme proposed and provide an effective 'gateway' treatment into Bromyard with elements that are in compliance with the landscape guidance for the adjacent Timbered Plateau Farmland visual. I have described at length the visual containment and a strong structure to be adopted in the development which will be imperative to secure an approval by the LPA. The parts of the design that had adverse impacts on existing landscape character have been altered to avoid, minimise and mitigate the said impacts as part of the refinement and development of the final layout.

5.15 Landscape Character Impact Appraisal (Short Term 0 -1 year)

In the short term there is likely to be a local, direct, temporary, **Major to Moderate adverse** effect will be experienced as the existing built form is demolished but once the site is cleared the magnitude of impacts will be diminished as the existing structure are very intrusive and conspicuous as described. The removal of these detractors is considered **beneficial**. **However**, some light pollution will continue as the source is off site and will only be partially resolved by the screening of the light by the apartment element of the proposals.

5.20 Visual Impact Appraisal (Short Term 0 -1 year)

5.21 The effect of the construction phase of the on the previously identified visual receptors is summarised in Table 1.0. The effects during this construction phase will be permanent. The visibility of the Scheme Proposal from the identified visual receptors is summarised in table 1.0 and the description in the selected viewpoints (see table 2.0) includes VP1 to VP14 as a representative sample.

5.22 The plant and construction apparatus associated with the construction of the scheme Proposal is likely to be visible from the approaches to the site and the key viewpoints as described, but is only a temporary visual impact.

5.23 The effects of the Scheme Proposal on its first day of occupation will be **permanent**. At this stage the buildings associated with the preferred scheme will be built, but the planting shown in the landscape proposals plan will not yet be fully mature. Overall this re-working of an urban parcel in a landscape setting does give the opportunity to soften the impacts of the earlier development that didn't need to consider these constraint and is why the impacts are so evident. The current site impacts can only be described as **Major adverse** as the impact on adjacent open countryside and the rural scenery has been permanent and the current change to the baseline condition whilst changing use does give the opportunity to improve the sites condition by including mitigative measures and enhancement as outlined as well as removing those element considered most **negative**. By careful site planning the improved general arrangement should at least improve the sites relationship with its local environment by incorporating these landscape measures that whilst not extensive on a landscape scale are particular important on this site due to its location on the ridgeline with a good degree of intervisibility with the local countryside surrounding it.

5.24 Landscape character (medium term 2 -14 years)

5.25 Once the housing units have been developed and apartment built the landscape scheme would improve year on year as it establishes greatly assisting the assimilation of the urban land use into the local area being very much part of the rural countryside.

5.26 In order for the housing & apartment building to be incorporated into the landscape minimising impacts it is imperative that the avoidance of adverse aspects of the feasibility layout are addressed during detail design stage as the form, massing and materials all need to respect the local vernacular and the site 'genius loci'. The rejection of the feasibility layout and having established the criteria for the viability of such a housing proposal the design has been altered to reflect the findings of the landscape architect spelt out in this assessment. The revised scheme has now been adjusted to retain those landscape features that define local distinctiveness and reinforce landscape character. This iterative design process has benefitted the layout which retains all the trees on site and the remnant agricultural hedgerows.

5.27 The landscape strategy if adopted would within the timescale make a contribution to the local character in line with landscape guidelines and much of the earlier impacts would be remediated and removed leaving a more sustainable development forming a pleasant 'gateway' into Bromyard that is in keep with the rural scenery..

5.28 Visual Impact Appraisal (medium term 2-14 Years)

5.29 The order of impacts has been reduced by the retention of the remaining landscape elements that can be traced through the historical regression. Whilst the field lost to the 1907'S PFS development is unlikely to reinstate the landscape proposals in accepting the 'urban' nature of the proposed new residential use has sought to incorporate as many landscape element that can be included in such a small site by using techniques that will allow tree station to be established whilst not impeding the use of the site to support its main land use. By working in conjunction with the architect hedges have been located in the general arrangement where they are most advantageous to the local ecology by reinforcing local habit for migration, foraging and improving connectivity for instance. The landscape scheme become established by year 3-4 and by year 7 onwards should be making a positive contribution to the developments setting.

5.30 Effect during first year of operation (long term – 15 years)

5.31 The implementation of a carefully considered set of landscape proposals to ensure the housing and apartment element is incorporated into the development in a sensitive way, respecting the local landscape character, is imperative to minimise harm and some aspect of the scheme that have been adjusted (i.e. avoidance of harm) with the final layout being altered to reflect these landscape recommendations. If development proceeds once the principle of re-development of the site has been established the restoration of landscape features retaining all trees and hedges and undertaking vegetation management and protection

measure are considered to be essential for the scheme to be a success.

5.32 The landscape treatments will need be carefully devised to mitigate the potential impacts on the sensitive receptors and open rural countryside and offset the impacts identified by retention of existing features in this otherwise fragmented landscape parcel that is sensitive to change by virtue of its visibility from adjacent areas.. This planting of new native hedgerows and tree planting to assist in screening housing from those sensitive receptors around the site where open views occur which will ensure receptors are not adversely affected..

5.32 The landscape strategy plan includes hedge restoration to the boundaries wherever possible, tree planting and retention of all existing trees and native species hedge on site.

5.34 Landscape Character Impact Appraisal (long term- 15 years)

5.35 Once the landscape strategy has matured the effect of the scheme proposal on the urban parcel incorporating the proposed housing will undoubtedly change the local character but the degree of this change has been substantially reduce by re-organising the general arrangement to reflect the landscape context in which the development is being brought forward. Once established the landscape scheme and the local vernacular treatment by incorporating materials and colours found in the local landscape should enable the scheme to be fully integrated into the rural scene on this important gateway site into Bromyard with the built form being subservient to the landscape features that are landmarks and should remain the dominant features in the landscape setting.

5.36 Visual Impact Appraisal (long term – 15 years)

5.37 The landscapes appearance will have been changed as what is proposed is a permanent change from an 'urban' (commercial retail garage site with Petrol Filling Station) to a less intrusive residential scheme, still urban but with additional opportunities to restore the landscape as far is possible on such a small parcel.

6.0 Summary and Conclusion

6.1 The LVIA has been undertaken by a thorough study of the Application Site and its landscape setting and context. Through understanding these features and resources, a robust impact appraisal of the initial Scheme Proposals has been undertaken in line with good practice principles and has considered some aspect of planning policy. The assessment has taken account of the sites historical use and development with those elements that currently define its unique character being identified for retention. The appraisal element has also taken into account the close proximity of the Timber Plateau Farmland landscape character and its guidelines for restoration adapting these to the site being on a much smaller scale A number of recommendations and observations following empirical observations including the condition of some landscape element that may benefit from positive management (e.g. H4) and retention (Trees T1, T2 & T3) that would be a significant factor in reducing the said impacts of this development proposal.

- 6.2** The initial feasibility study following feedback from the Local Planning Authority who sought a landscape led approach to the Masterplan was taken on board and the Landscape Architect advised the architect to reconfigure the general arrangement to minimise the said impacts of the feasibility scheme by relocating the apartment block element into a less intrusive location minimising impacts.
- 6.3** The application site now has a reasonable arrangement where the element are arranged to reduce the said impacts as far is practical and maximises the opportunities for mitigative planting including new tree planting and native hedges on the boundaries and through the centre of the development to improve the local habitat.
- 6.4** Whilst the application site is not within a designated landscape it is immediately adjacent to Birchyfields which is unregistered parkland with its woodland estate in a 'Reptonian' style. No other landscape designations are related to the site being too far distant to be affected by the proposals.
- 6.5** The site doesn't not have any listed structures within its confines but is within 0.5km Birchyfields House a listed building and its curtilage within 10 metres need to be considered so the new built form respects its location and as a feature in the local landscape.
- 6.6** The existing trees are young Beech (T1, T2 & T3) and will be retained. H2, H3 and H4 (to be layed) will be retained and protected.
- 6.7** The apartment scheme will screen the light pollution from Hope Family Centre to some limited degree.
- 6.8** New ecological enhancement will be incorporated to the substation as an eco-hub making provision for hedge hogs, bats nd birds (owl). Bird boxes will be erected in trees, gaps in fencing for hedgehog to migrate & forage with fruit species of trees incorporated into the planting proposals.
- 6.9** Inter car park tree pits and planting isles will soften the appearance of the car park associated with the apartment scheme.
- 6.12** The provision of soft landscape areas using meadow turf will increase the percentage of the site that is laid to lawn, hedge, amenity planting area, making the site less harsh as part of its remediation and restoration.
- 6.13** The surface water will be fed into a sustainable urban drainage scheme adopting the principles of source control.
- 6.14** **END OF REPORT**

7.0 Appendices:

- 1.0 Location Plan
- 1.1 Aerial Photograph & Existing Site Images
- 1.2 Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) Plan.
- 1.3 Public Right of Way (PROW) Network & Walking Leisure Routes.
- 1.4 Malvern Hills AONB (discounted as too far away).
- 1.5 Other Landscape Designations.
- 1.6 Historical Regression Maps, Sheet 1 - Various
- 1.7 Historical Maps: Landmark, Sheet 2 – 1885 (after 1:10,000)
- 1.8 Historical Maps: Landmark, Sheet 3 - 1930 (after 1:10560)
- 1.9 Historical Maps: Landmark, Sheet 4 - 1964 (after 1:10,000)
- 1.10 Historical Maps: Landmark, Sheet 5 - 1974-1975 (1:2500)
- 1.11 Historical Maps: Landmark, Sheet 6 - 1984 (after 1:10,000)
- 1.12 Landform & Topography.
- 1.13 Local Geology
- 1.14 Local Hydrology (River Frome & Riverside Meadows)

- 2.0 Landscape Character Area 101 Herefordshire Plateau
- 2.1 Landscape Character Type Mapping
- 2.2 Landscape Character Type - Timbered Plateau Farmland

- 3.0 Landscape Description Units Plan
- 3.1 Landscape Description Units Table (BP10b, BP07.4g, BP07.4d, BP07.4a etc.)

- 4.0 Topographic Survey
- 4.1 Tree & Vegetation / Hedge Survey Plan
- 4.2 Tree Survey Schedule
- 4.3 Root Protection Area Table (to inform architects layout)
- 4.4 Tree Retention, Removal & Protection Plan

- 5.0 Initial Architects Proposals
- 5.1 Landscape Advisory Sketch (Amendments)
- 5.2 Landscape informed Architects Site Plan (following DTM, Bromyard with Design development discussions)
- 5.3 Architect's Layout after Landscape Architect's comments/observations
- 5.4 Landscape Strategy Plan
- 5.5 Inter car park Tree Pit - Typical Detail (GLA877-500)
- 5.6 Grease trap under porous paving - Typical Detail (GLA877-501)

- 6.00 Viewpoints Location Plan
- 6.01 Viewpoints - Sheet 1
- 6.02 Viewpoints - Sheet 2
- 6.03 Viewpoints - Sheet 3
- 6.04 Viewpoints - Sheet 4
- 6.05 Viewpoints - Sheet 5
- 6.06 Viewpoints - Sheet 6
- 6.07 Viewpoints - Sheet 7