



Land at The Elms, Eardisland, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 9BN

Proposed Residential Use

On behalf of Mr & Mrs M Hicks

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

Prepared by
John Campion Associates Limited

FINAL August 2023

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 John Campion Associates Limited (JCA) have been commissioned by Mr & Mrs Hicks, under instruction from Tompkins Thomas Planning, to prepare a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA), in support of a full planning application for the development of a single detached dwelling with associated infrastructure on land at The Elms, Eardisland, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 9BN.
- 1.2 This appraisal has been prepared by John Campion, Chartered Landscape Architect, Director of JCA. He has been involved in a wide range of commissions, including major infrastructure, and building projects within designated landscapes. He has provided strategic landscape advice for major rural design projects and has worked on preparing and reviewing environmental impact assessments and is an experienced landscape expert witness. This included the frequent review of landscape and visual impact assessments for major planning applications in Wales, as part of a renewable consultancy framework agreement with the former Countryside Council for Wales and its successor authority, Natural Resources Wales, [REDACTED]. He has lectured on Landscape Design, Management and Professional Practice at the University of Manchester, Edinburgh College of Art (Heriot-Watt University), Sheffield University and Bristol University. For over twenty years, he was an examiner for the final professional practice examinations of the Landscape Institute.

2. SCOPE OF THE REPORT

- 2.1 This LVA has been prepared with reference to guidance, as far as it is appropriate to an appraisal of this nature, contained in:
“Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact assessment” (3rd Edition, 2013), published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Management and Environmental Assessment (GLVIA3).
GLVIA3 notes that, in an Appraisal such as this for the proposed development
*‘... the process is informal and there is more flexibility in the approach that is taken [compared to a full LVIA] but the essence of the approach still applies’.*¹

3. METHODOLOGY

Study Area

- 3.1 The Study Area for the assessment has been defined in accordance with the guidance provided in GLVIA3, which advises that the study area for a landscape assessment *‘should include the Site itself and the full extent of the wider landscape around it which the proposed development may influence in a significant manner.’*²
- 3.2 Given the small-scale nature and the particular characteristics of the development as envisaged, within an existing dispersed settlement – together with the nature of the local topography and the amount of vegetation cover and intervening buildings - no substantial effects at any stage of the development are anticipated beyond 100 metres from the edge of the Site.

¹ GLVIA3 op.cit.; Chapter 3 Summary of advice on good practice, p.45

² Ibid., paragraph 5.2, p.70

- 3.3 Wherever possible, the analysis has been objective, the residual effects quantified, and any subjective judgements have been described in clearly defined terms. Both objective analysis and subjective professional judgements are required for effective, high-quality landscape and visual analysis.

Surveys

- 3.4 Detailed desktop surveys were carried out of published material relevant to the landscape of the Site and its wider context. Material included maps, photographic evidence, historic landscape and cultural data, and relevant adopted local planning policies and supplementary planning guidance. Fieldwork enabled the recording of various landscape elements such as topography, land use and vegetation. From the analysis of this combination of material, it was possible to carry out an evaluation of landscape character and assess the predicted effects of the development as envisaged.

Assumptions

- 3.5 Reference to 'the Site' should be interpreted as the area contained within the boundary of the land which is likely to coincide with the planning application red line boundary - *refer to Appendix: Illustrations; Figure JCA/01: Landscape Context & Assessment Viewpoint Locations*.
- 3.6 All visual assessment field survey work has been undertaken from within publicly accessible areas only: where included, views from private properties and commercial buildings are approximate and have been estimated, with reference to the nearest publicly-accessible location from which assessment could reasonably take place, unless otherwise stated.

Assessment Viewpoints

- 3.7 A series of potential assessment viewpoints, based on desktop analysis of mapped information and aerial photography, was selected to be representative of the various groups of receptors whose views may be affected by the type of development under consideration. The focus, when selecting viewpoints, was on '*likely significant effects*' and taking '*an approach that is proportional to the scale of the project that is being assessed and the nature of its likely effects*', in line with GLVIA3 as current best practice guidance³; although it should be noted that the term 'significant' is not defined within this guidance, nor indeed within the Environmental Assessment Regulations where a formal landscape and visual impact assessment is required. This approach involves using professional judgement and, for this appraisal, we identified potential locations from where likely *substantial* effects could occur. These candidate viewpoints were then reviewed in the field and refined, as necessary.
- 3.8 A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) has not been identified and mapped as part of this Appraisal. Given that the proposed development site is small scale - and partially screened by nearby buildings, curtilage trees and hedgerows and mature tree cover, with consequentially little effect on the surrounding landscape - it was our view that a computer-generated ZTV would give a misleading impression of potential visibility. The key to establishing an accurate

³ GLVIA3 *op.cit.*; Chapter 1 Summary of advice on good practice, p.12

baseline of visibility was the fieldwork survey, which was carried out by an experienced professional landscape architect on Thursday 13th July 2023, during overcast summer weather with occasional sunny periods and mostly good visibility.

Landscape Receptor Sensitivity

- 3.9 The term 'landscape receptor' means an element or a group of elements which will be directly or indirectly affected by the proposals. Landscape receptors are physical elements or attributes of the landscape that could be affected by the development, such as landscape character, landform, watercourses, woodland, groups of trees or hedgerows, land uses and field boundaries.
- 3.10 Prior to the advent of the landscape character assessment procedure now used by local authorities, the sensitivity of a given landscape receptor was often defined in terms of landscape value, which took the form of national planning designations - such as National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty - or local designations, such as Areas of Great Landscape Value or Special Landscape Areas. Recent assessment guidance has placed greater emphasis on those landscapes which do not benefit from national or local designations, but which may be valued locally for particular reasons. In assessing the value of a given landscape, we have used the range of factors which can be taken into consideration as listed in Box 5.1 of GLVIA3 (p.84), insofar as they relate to the particular landscape context.
- 3.11 The sensitivity of landscape receptors is assessed by combining judgements on the susceptibility to the type of change proposed and the value attached to the landscape, in accordance with GLVIA3, and defined in *Table 1, below*:

Table 1: Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

Sensitivity	Landscape Type or Feature
High	An area possessing a particularly distinctive sense of place, in good condition, or highly valued for its scenic quality and/or landscape character, for example National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Heritage Coasts, Grade 1 Listed Buildings and historic parks; or an intact feature of high intrinsic value; [such as prominent trees or tree groups, forming a critical part of the landscape pattern or historic landscape pattern]; landscapes or features with a low tolerance to change of the type identified.
Medium	An area with a well-defined sense of place and/or character in moderate condition; or an area valued by designation at a local or regional level; or a partly damaged feature of high intrinsic value; or an intact feature of moderate intrinsic value [such as prominent trees or tree groups which contribute to the character of the Site, screening of views, landscape or historic landscape pattern]; a landscape or feature which is partially tolerant of change of the type identified.
Low	An area with a poorly defined sense of place, and/or landscape character in poor condition, often not valued for its scenic quality; or a feature of low intrinsic value [such as trees and species-poor hedgerows of no special quality or

Sensitivity	Landscape Type or Feature
	function]; or a landscape or feature that is tolerant of change of the type identified.

Magnitude of Landscape Effect

- 3.12 The criteria used to assess the magnitude of landscape effects (including those on landscape character and historical landscape character and setting) are based upon the geographic extent of the area influenced, the predicted amount of physical change - and its duration and reversibility - that will occur as a result of the proposals, as described in *Table 2, below*. These are based on best practice examples and experience:

Table 2: Magnitude of Landscape Effect

Landscape Effect Magnitude	Description
Major adverse landscape effect	The proposals will be at <i>complete variance</i> with the scale, landform, pattern, or character of the landscape, and/or would <i>diminish or destroy</i> the integrity of characteristic features and their settings.
Moderate adverse landscape effect	The proposals will be <i>at odds</i> with the scale, landform, pattern, or character of the landscape and/or would cause a <i>noticeable diminution</i> of the integrity of characteristic features and their settings.
Minor adverse landscape effect	The proposals will <i>not quite fit into</i> the scale, landform, pattern, or character of the landscape and/or would cause a <i>perceptible diminution</i> of the integrity of characteristic features and their settings.
Negligible adverse landscape effect	The proposals will create a <i>barely perceptible diminution of the integrity of characteristic features and their settings</i> .
No change	The proposals will <i>not cause any change</i> to the scale, landform, pattern, or character of the landscape.
Negligible landscape beneficial effect	The proposals will provide a <i>barely perceptible enhancement of the integrity of characteristic features and their settings</i> .
Minor landscape beneficial effect	The proposals will achieve a <i>degree of fit</i> with the scale, landform, pattern, or character of the landscape and <i>make a minor contribution to enhancing</i> the character, sense of place or integrity of the landscape.
Moderate landscape beneficial effect	The proposals <i>will fit well with</i> the scale, landform, pattern, or character of the landscape and would <i>noticeably enhance</i> the character, sense of place or integrity of the landscape.

Landscape Effect Magnitude	Description
Major landscape beneficial effect	The proposals <i>will fit very well</i> with the scale, landform, pattern, or character of the landscape and would <i>restore or greatly enhance</i> the character, sense of place or scale of the landscape.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

- 3.13 The term 'visual receptor' means people - individuals and/or defined groups of people - who have the potential to be affected, directly or indirectly, by the proposals. Visual receptors are at accessible viewpoints, the sensitivity of which would be dependent on the location, the activity and expectations of the viewer, and the importance of the view. These would include viewpoints available to the users of outdoor facilities, sporting activities and users of public rights of way; viewpoints from landscape features and beauty spots; viewpoints outside local properties (which would represent the view for residents); and viewpoints available to people travelling through the landscape. Views may be glimpsed and fleeting, or open and sustained.
- 3.14 The determination of the sensitivity of the visual receptors is a matter of professional judgement. The guidance in GLVIA3 recommends that the assessment of sensitivity will be dependent on:
- the location and context of a viewpoint;
 - the expectations and occupation or activity of the viewer;
 - the importance of the view (which may be determined with respect to its popularity, or the numbers of people affected, its appearance in guidebooks, on tourist maps, and in the facilities provided for its enjoyment and references to it in literature or art); and
 - the scale of the view and the extent of visibility.

Table 3: Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

Sensitivity	Visual Receptor
High	Viewers with a particular <i>interest</i> in their visual environment and/or prolonged viewing opportunities; for example, residents within their homes or in the curtilage of their property; or visitors to National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or Heritage Coasts; or walkers and riders on National Trails or on promoted regional trails.
Medium	Viewers with a <i>general interest</i> in their visual environment; for example, visitors to regionally or locally valued countryside - including Access Land and National Trust Land not within a designated landscape - and users of local open space facilities, and walkers or horse riders on local public rights of way which are not specifically promoted for their visual interest.

Sensitivity	Visual Receptor
Low	Viewers with a <i>passing or momentary interest</i> in their everyday surroundings, for example motorists or people at their place of work, whose attention is focussed on other activities and who are therefore less susceptible to change.

- 3.15 The magnitude of visual effects depends on factors such as separation distance, the time of day, the season, the prevailing weather conditions, elevation, and aspect, as well as the context of the view. The predicted level of effect has been assessed during good visibility and light conditions, therefore with the best possible view of the potential development site. Proper allowance has also been made for the likely visibility of the development under consideration during the winter aspect; that is, without the presence of leaves on deciduous vegetation and its consequential contribution to screening effects. All assessment viewpoints were visited during Thursday 13th July 2023.
- 3.16 The following scale has been adopted for assessing the magnitude of visual effects, based on the degree of change to the view, or to the composition - *see Table 4, below*. This is based on best practice examples and previous experience.

Table 4: Magnitude of Visual Effect

Visual Effect Magnitude	Description
Major adverse or beneficial visual effect	The proposals will cause a <i>dominant or complete change</i> to the composition of the view, the appreciation of the landscape character, or the ability to take or enjoy the view.
Moderate adverse or beneficial visual effect	The proposals will cause a <i>clearly noticeable change</i> to the view, which would affect the composition, the appreciation of landscape character, or the ability to take in or enjoy the view.
Minor adverse or beneficial visual effect	The proposals will cause a <i>perceptible change</i> to the view, but which would not materially affect the composition, the appreciation of landscape character, or the ability to take in or enjoy the view.
Negligible adverse or beneficial visual effect	The proposals will cause a <i>barely perceptible change</i> to the view, which would not affect the composition, the appreciation of landscape character, or the ability to take in or enjoy the view.
No change	The proposals will cause no change to the view.

Assessment of Overall Level of Effect

- 3.17 The scale shown in *Table 5, below*, has been adopted to assess the overall level of both landscape and visual effects and whether they are considered to be adverse, beneficial, or neutral. (*Note that neutral effects would be those where there may be a landscape or visual*

change, but the overall weighting of positive and negative effects is very finely balanced). The basis of this scale is derived from professional experience. In accordance with good practice, the main aim in the reporting of the identified effects is to describe the key landscape and visual issues which are relevant to determining a future planning application for the construction of six dwellings houses within the selected site; for the purposes of this assessment, such effects are referred to as being *substantial* - which we would define as being of material consideration and likely to influence decisions. It should be noted that the term 'residual effects' used in this assessment refers to those effects which are predicted, having taken into account the full nature and extent of the siting and landscape mitigation measures which might be proposed, in the interests of achieving good design and a sympathetic site layout which respects the characteristics of this part of the Bishopswood settlement and its designated landscape context.

Table 5: Assessment of Overall Landscape or Visual Level of Effect

(It should be noted that some of assessment values below, e.g. moderate-minor, are expressed as a continuum. In these instances, our professional judgement is that the assessment of the level of effect is not sufficiently weighted as to be defined by a single value of say moderate or minor. Our approach follows GLVIA 3 guidance on the importance of professional judgement in landscape and visual assessment)

Magnitude of Change	Receptor Sensitivity		
	High	Medium	Low
Major	Major Adverse/Beneficial	Moderate Adverse/Beneficial	Minor Adverse/Beneficial
Moderate	Major-Moderate Adverse/Beneficial	Moderate-Minor Adverse/Beneficial	Minor Adverse/Beneficial
Minor	Moderate-Minor Adverse/Beneficial	Minor Adverse/Beneficial	Minor-Negligible
Negligible	Minor-Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Note: Those cells shaded in blue are considered to be *substantial* effects.

4. BASELINE CONDITIONS

- 4.1 The baseline condition information is assembled by a process which combines the results of desktop research with those of detailed field observation and analysis.

Landscape Baseline

Location and Land Use

- 4.2 The Site is located at the western edge of the village of Eardisland, just to the south of the River Arrow floodplain. Eardisland is a small, nucleated village situated to the west of Leominster and east of Pembridge. The Site lies immediately adjacent to the north-west of the residential property known as The Elms, which is connected to the main public road through the village by a private access drive.
- 4.3 The Site itself consists of a parcel of very gently sloping land approximately 0.65 hectares in extent, within part of a single field. The Site is currently in use as pasture grassland with some evidence of past livestock grazing (by sheep). There are residential properties located nearby to the south-east of The Elms, at Orchard Green, Green Elms and Haven Drive, and there are other houses to the east, set along the main road through the village. There is arable agricultural land adjacent to the west and pastoral agricultural land adjoining to the east and north-east.

Topography

- 4.4 Eardisland village is located mostly on low-lying ground straddling the River Arrow. The proposed development Site is located on gently sloping land that falls generally towards the north-east. The northern extremity of the Site is at around 87 metres Above Ordnance Datum (m AOD). The south-western corner of the Site is at around 88.5m AOD and the south-eastern corner is around 89m AOD. To the north-east beyond the Site boundary, the land falls gently down to the River Arrow floodplain, at the southern edge of which is a millstream which flows eastwards from a weir upstream on the River Arrow into the centre of Eardisland. To the west, the land rises gradually up to a small local area of higher ground in the adjoining field, the high point of which is at 92m AOD. To the east, the land falls gently to the north-east towards the former millstream at the floodplain edge, at around 84-85m AOD. The main road through the village to the east near the entrance drive to The Elms is at just over 84m AOD. To the south, the land surrounding The Elms is typically around 88-89m AOD. The Site lies above nearby areas of land to the north, north-east and east which are liable to flooding - refer to **Appendix, Figure JCA/01: Landscape Context & Assessment Viewpoint Locations**.

Existing Site Vegetation and Site Boundaries

- 4.5 The north-eastern site boundary is demarcated by a mature field boundary hedgerow backed by timber post-and-wire stock fences. There are occasional mature standard ash trees growing within this hedgerow at irregular intervals. The southern site boundary is delineated by a post-and-wire stock fence separating the field from the western curtilage garden of The Elms. The western boundary is demarcated by two parallel timber post-and-wire stock/barbed wire fences bordering an adjoining arable field. Occasional tree saplings have become established along this boundary.

- 4.6 Within the Site, the vegetation is comprised of open agricultural grassland. At the time of survey, the grass sward was cropped short and there were widespread signs that the field had been recently grazed by sheep.

Existing Structures

- 4.7 There are no existing structures within the Site.

Heritage Assets

- 4.8 There is a designated Conservation Area at Eardisland. The Conservation Area map indicates that the proposed development site lies outside but adjacent to a section of the western boundary of the designated area - *refer to **Appendix, Figure JCA/02: Policy & Heritage Designations***.

- 4.9 The following Listed Buildings⁴ present in the village are those located closest to the Site - *refer to **Appendix, Figure JCA/02: Policy & Heritage Designations***; all are more than 150 metres distant from the nearest site boundary and only some are partially intervisible with it:

- *Burcott Cottage, A44; Cobblers Cottage, A44; and the old Post Office and Stores, A44* are all Grade II-Listed buildings set along the eastern side of the main road through the village⁵. These are three contiguous timber-framed residential properties which are located almost opposite the entrance drive to The Elms. The nearest section of the site boundary is c. 150 metres distant. There are some partial glimpsed views of the Site at present from the front ground floor windows and western curtilages of these houses. The intervening ground has existing buildings, trees, and hedgerows, as well as curtilage vegetation around The Elms and Orchard Green;
- *Knapp House, Grade II*-Listed*, is situated on the eastern side of the main road further to the north of the above properties. It is around 180 metres distant from the nearest part of the site boundary. There are only very limited partial views of the Site from the front curtilage of this house at its southern end;
- *St Mary's Church, Grade II**, situated close to the eastern edge of the village, around 360 metres from the nearest section of the site boundary. There is no intervisibility between the church and the Site because of intervening built form and curtilage vegetation within the village.

The Site does not lie within the visual setting of any of these Listed Buildings - *refer to **Appendix, Figure JCA/01: Landscape Context & Assessment Viewpoint Locations; and Figure JCA/04: Landscape Context Photographs (1)***.

- 4.10 There is a single Scheduled Monument in the vicinity of the Site: the Motte earthwork, located to the north of St Mary's Church at the eastern edge of the village and to the south of the River Arrow - *refer to **Appendix, Figure JCA/02: Policy & Heritage Designations***. This monument includes a motte castle situated in the valley of the River Arrow close to its southern bank. The motte survives as a circular mound measuring up to 44.8m in diameter and 4.8m high with a smooth profile and flat top surrounded by a water-filled moat which is

⁴ All heritage asset information derived from the current *Historic England* website, interrogated on 17th July 2023

⁵ Formerly the A44, now re-classified as the C1035 road

up to 3.6m deep. Access to the mound across the ditch is via a low bridge.⁶ There is no public access onto this feature. The motte is around 380 metres distant from the nearest part of the site boundary and there is no intervisibility with the proposed development site because of intervening built form and curtilage vegetation within the village. The Site does not form part of the visual setting of this heritage asset.

- 4.11 There are no Registered Historic Parks and Gardens in the vicinity of the Site. The nearest such heritage asset is at the Shobdon Estate, just to the north-east of Shobdon village, located around 3.76kms distant to the north-west at its closest point. This is a Grade II Park & Garden dating from the eighteenth century.⁷ This historic park and garden asset has no inter-visibility with the Site, due to the separation distance and intervening higher ground, buildings, woodland, boundary hedgerows with trees, and curtilage vegetation. Consequently, the Site does not form part of the visual setting of the Shobdon Estate.

Public Rights of Way

- 4.12 A single public right of way crosses the north-eastern section of the Site. This is the public footpath Eardisland 7 which links Eardisland to Pembridge (Reference Nr ED7). This footpath runs roughly westwards from its junction with the footway on the western side of the main C1035 road through Eardisland, crossing the open grass field adjacent to the north-eastern boundary of the Site. It passes through the field boundary hedgerow demarcating the north-eastern site boundary by way of a short plank bridge between two wicket gates, beyond which the footpath turns sharply north-westwards. It traverses the north-eastern section of the Site to its northernmost extremity, where it crosses the field boundary via a wicket gate. The public footpath route then continues along the northern edge of the adjacent arable field on a roughly westerly alignment in the direction of Pembridge – *refer to Appendix, Figure JCA/01: Landscape Context & Viewpoint Location Plan.*
- 4.13 The other nearby local public right of way is a public footpath which links the main road through Eardisland just north of the bridge over the River Arrow to Broome Lane to the north-west of the village, at a point just west of the bridge carrying this road over the River Arrow (Reference Nr ED6) - *refer to Appendix, Figure JCA/01: Landscape Context & Viewpoint Location Plan.*

Public Roads

- 4.14 There are two public roads in the near vicinity of the Site: the nearest is the main road running through Eardisland village, the C1035 (formerly the A44), which lies some 150 metres to the east of the nearest part of the site boundary and at an elevation of around 84m AOD ⁸ (*see Appendix, Figure JCA/01: Landscape Context & Viewpoint Location Plan*). At present, there are partial views of the proposed development site from a short section this road.
- 4.15 The other nearby public road is Broome Lane (C1035) which runs westwards from just south of the bridge over the River Arrow in Eardisland and runs westwards along the Arrow valley towards Pembridge. This road is around 130 metres north of the nearest boundary of the Site

⁶ All heritage asset information derived from the current *Historic England* website, interrogated on 17th July 2023

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Herefordshire Council* website, interrogated 17th July 2023

and at a similar elevation to the north-eastern boundary of the Site. Immediately west of the village, tall mature field boundary hedgerows flank both sides of Broome Lane, and the former millstream at the southern edge of the floodplain. Only beyond the edge of the village are there occasional glimpsed views towards the Site, the most open section being that from the road bridge over the River Arrow - refer to **Appendix, Figure JCA/01: Landscape Context & Viewpoint Location Plan**.

Landscape Character Assessment

- 4.16 At the national level of consideration of landscape character, the Site lies wholly within the *Natural England National Character Area 100, Herefordshire Lowlands* (National Character Area Profile on Natural England website, published 2014).

Identified 'Key characteristics' of the Herefordshire Lowlands relevant to the Site context include:

- *'Gently undulating landscape with localised steep-sided hills in the centre and wide agricultural flood plains.'*
- *'Wide, meandering river valleys drain the area, including the Wye, a major ecological and recreational asset, and the Lugg, and the valleys of the rivers Frome and Arrow also offer rich habitats.'*
- *'Pasture with occasional wet meadows and permanent grassland along the rivers. Low hedgerows with sparse tree cover. Arable cultivation on lower-lying land.'*
- *'Localised traditional and bush orchards and occasional hop fields planted with windbreaks.'*
- *'Timber-framed (black-and-white) buildings are characteristic with stone and red brick also used frequently as building materials.'*
- *'Dispersed rural settlement pattern throughout with scattered villages, hamlets, farmsteads and clustered settlements around commons. Historic market towns of Hereford and Leominster are the principal settlements.'*
- *'Tranquil and relatively undisturbed by major infrastructure aside from a few crossing A roads between Hereford, Hay-on-Wye and Leominster.'*⁹

- 4.17 At the more local level of consideration of landscape character, Herefordshire County Council have published their *Landscape Character Areas Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (2004; Updated 2009)*. For the purposes of this assessment, this guidance is used as the more detailed published baseline information for landscape character. The relevant character areas identified in this guidance have, however, been reviewed in the field as part of this LVA, in order to ensure that this Appraisal takes account of any changes in the local environment during the considerable time period which has elapsed since the original Herefordshire Landscape Character Study was undertaken and its subsequent update. An overall assessment of the susceptibility to change of the Site landscape and its surrounding landscape predicted to arise from the type of development under consideration has also been made (refer to Table 6, below).

- 4.18 The updated Herefordshire 2009 Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Guidance (LCASPG) places the Site just within a small area of the *'Principal Settled Farmlands' 'Landscape Type'* (Section 7.21) which, the Assessment observes, is the dominant Landscape

⁹ Natural England website interrogated 17th July 2023

Type in the rolling lowland area of Central Herefordshire – refer to **Appendix, Figure JCA/03: Landscape Character**. The ‘Character Description’ for this Landscape Type states that Principal Settled Farmlands landscapes are:

‘...settled agricultural landscapes of dispersed, scattered farms, relic commons and small villages and hamlets. The mixed farming land use reflects the good soils on which they are typically found. Networks of small winding lanes nestling within a matrix of hedged fields are characteristic. Tree cover is largely restricted to thinly scattered hedgerow trees, groups of trees around dwellings and trees along stream sides and other watercourses..... This is a landscape with a notably domestic character, defined chiefly by the scale of its field pattern, the nature and density of its settlement and its traditional land uses. Hop fields, orchards, grazed pastures and arable fields, together make up the rich patchwork which is typical of Principal Settled Farmlands.’¹⁰

- 4.19 In this Assessment, only two items are recorded under the sub-heading ‘Key Characteristics’. There is one ‘Primary’ entry:

• *hedgerows used for field boundaries’.*

There is one ‘Secondary’ entry:

• *mixed farming land use.’¹¹*

- 4.20 The updated LCASPG 2009 includes a section entitled ‘Utilisation of the Landscape Character Assessment’. Under the sub-heading entitled ‘Future Built Development’, prospective developers are advised to follow a systematic approach to assessing ‘the potential for their proposal and the most appropriate design treatment.’¹² The ‘Principal Settled Farmlands’ ‘Landscape Type’ is classified as being a ‘settled landscape’.¹³ The advice is therefore to consider the proposed development in relation to both the primary and secondary ‘Key Characteristics’ of this Landscape Type, as identified in paragraph 4.19, above.

- 4.21 Adjacent to the west and the north is a tract of the ‘Riverside Meadows’ Landscape Type (Section 7.14) – refer to **Appendix, Figure JCA/03: Landscape Character**. The updated LCASPG 2009 describes the character of Riverside Meadows as being:

‘... linear, riverine landscapes associated with a flat, generally well defined, alluvial floodplain, in places framed by steeply rising ground. They are secluded pastoral landscapes, characterised by meandering tree lined rivers, flanked by riverside meadows which are defined by hedge and ditch boundaries. Settlement is typically absent. Throughout these landscapes, the presence of extensive areas of seasonally grazed waterside meadows has in the past provided a strong sense of visual and ecological unity. These are landscapes that accommodate a degree of annual flooding, a factor which has been reflected in the traditional patterns of land use, the lack of settlement and development (except for the occasional water mill), and the representation of species and habitats tolerant of such waterlogged conditions. The natural fertility of Riverside Meadows has often been maximised by employing devices such as sluices to control and direct the silt laden flood waters. The unique Lammas Meadows bordering the River Lugg at Hereford are an excellent example of traditionally managed riverside meadows where the historic pattern of cutting and grazing has been continued for centuries. Tree cover is a notable element of Riverside Meadows, usually in a linear pattern along the hedge and

¹⁰ Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment, Supplementary Planning Guidance; updated 2009; section 7.21, p.69

¹¹ Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment, op.cit.; p.45

¹² Ibid.; paragraph 6.2.1, p.25

¹³ Ibid., Figure 4, p.19

*ditch lines and to the banks of watercourses. Typically, species are alder and willow, the latter often pollarded. This Landscape Type is associated with large rivers, and in the case of Herefordshire, the Rivers Arrow, Clun, Frome, Leadon, Lodon, Lugg, Monnow, Teme and Wye.*¹⁴

- 4.22 In this Assessment, seven items are recorded under the sub-heading 'Key Characteristics'. There are four 'Primary' entries, as follows:

- *pastoral land use*
- *well defined linear patterns of willow and alder*
- *tree cover represented by stream side and hedgerow trees*
- *unsettled landscape*'.

There are three 'Secondary' entries, as follows:

- *wetland habitat*
- *river channel*
- *hedge and ditch boundaries.*¹⁵

- 4.23 The mapping of the distribution of these Landscape Types within the Assessment was carried out at a large scale and is presented in a schematic form without the benefit of an Ordnance Survey Map base for ease of reference - refer to **Appendix, Figure JCA/03: Landscape Character**. The map indicates that the nearby area of Riverside Meadows Landscape Type extends to the south-west of the Arrow floodplain to the west of the Site.¹⁶ Fieldwork shows that the adjacent arable field to the west of the western site boundary includes a small local area of higher ground rising to a top height of 92m AOD - refer to **Appendix: Illustrations; Figure JCA/01: Landscape Context & Assessment Viewpoint Locations**; and desk research reveals that this land does not lie within land areas identified as being liable to flooding.¹⁷ This slightly higher land does not exhibit any of the stated characteristics of the Riverside Meadows Landscape Type; whereas those key characteristics are frequent and readily discernible on the lower lying grassland land to the north and north-east of the Site.

Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 4.24 There is a Neighbourhood Development Plan in place for Eardisland Parish. This is the *Eardisland Neighbourhood Development Plan to 2031* (Eardisland NDP).¹⁸ The Eardisland NDP was adopted in October 2016.
- 4.25 The Eardisland NDP defines a settlement boundary for the village - refer to **Appendix, Figure JCA/02: Policy & Heritage Designations**. The proposed development site lies outside the settlement boundary. The Eardisland NDP has identified no policy specifically relating to the Site and mapped on the Eardisland Village Policies Map.¹⁹

¹⁴ Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment, *op.cit.*; Section 7.14, p.55

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.55

¹⁶ Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment, *op.cit.* Figure 8 Map of Distribution of Landscape Types, p.21

¹⁷ Eardisland Neighbourhood Development Plan, Parish Policies Map, Appendix 5

¹⁸ Eardisland Neighbourhood Development Plan to 2031; published July 2016

¹⁹ Eardisland NDP *op.cit.*; Village Policies Map, Appendix 5

Overall Landscape Sensitivity

- 4.26 Landscape sensitivity is defined in relation to several factors, and it does not necessarily follow that a highly valued landscape or landscape feature will always be ascribed a high sensitivity. Landscape designation is thus only one of several criteria that are considered in identifying the relative ‘sensitivity’ of the landscape to a proposed development. It should not be used in isolation. We have assessed the overall sensitivity of the existing landscape resource, based on the following representative criteria:
- Existing land use;
 - Landscape scale and pattern;
 - Landscape value²⁰ and quality (condition)²¹;
 - Nature of views and degree of visual enclosure and openness;
 - Landscape designations present; and
 - Scope for mitigation.
- 4.26 The overall sensitivity of a landscape is categorised as high, medium, or low for the purposes of this assessment. This assessment is derived from analysis in relation to the above stated representative criteria.
- 4.27 *Table 6, below, provides information relating to the various criteria affecting landscape sensitivity which we have used to arrive at a final overall level of sensitivity for the local landscape.*

Table 6: Sensitivity of the Development Site and the Local Landscape to the Proposed Development

LANDSCAPE ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION
Land Use	The Site comprises part of a single small agricultural grassland field. Adjoining land use to the north, north-east, east and west is agricultural. To the south and south-east the land use is residential.
Scale and Pattern	The Site is located adjacent to the nucleated village of Eardisland. The Site forms part of the pattern of small-scale and irregular-shaped agricultural fields that surround much of the settlement - <i>refer to Appendix, Figure JCA/01: Landscape Context & Assessment Viewpoint Locations</i> . The scale of the Eardisland landscape is small to medium, influenced strongly by the domestic scale of the built form and the mosaic pattern of small to medium-sized plots, enclosing mature boundary hedgerows with trees, small stands of woodland, and the narrow lanes with flanking hedgerows which provide access.

²⁰ *Landscape Value* - defined by GLVIA3 (Glossary) as being: ‘The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons.’

²¹ *Landscape quality (condition)* – defined by GLVIA3 (Glossary) as being: ‘A measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements.’

LANDSCAPE ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION
	The scale of the wider landscape beyond the village envelope is also mostly small to medium, with riparian tree cover along the valley of the River Arrow and its linking watercourses. The irregular-shaped fields are generally bounded by mature field boundary hedgerows with occasional trees, or by narrow linear belts of woodland - <i>refer to Appendix, Figures JCA/04 & 05: Landscape Context Photographs.</i>
Value and Quality	<p>Eardisland village is set within an area of generally well-managed countryside with a significant degree of enclosure and few detracting elements present. There is a designated Conservation Area at Eardisland. There are twenty-seven Listed Buildings located within the village and two Scheduled Monuments.</p> <p>The Site's character is partly influenced by the proximity of the existing buildings to the east, south-east and south which have variable built forms and construction materials.</p>
Nature of Views	<p>The village of Eardisland is set mostly on low-lying land forming part of the floodplain of the River Arrow. There are only very occasional glimpsed views out to the surrounding landscape from within the village, due to the degree of screening by built form and curtilage or boundary vegetation. The very gently sloping terrain is also a contributory factor.</p> <p>For the same reasons, there are very few views into Eardisland from the surrounding landscape, even at close range. This is particularly evident in areas to the south-west and west of the village. There are no views of any buildings within Eardisland obtainable from the A44 main road to the east of Pembridge - <i>refer to Appendix, Figure JCA/05: Landscape Context Photographs (2) – Photographs C6 & C8.</i></p>
Landscape Designations	The Site does not lie within a designated landscape.
Potential Scope for Mitigation	<p>Siting of the proposed house and garage sympathetically in relation to the existing edge of the village and to take optimum advantage of existing assimilation by nearby buildings, curtilage vegetation, and mature field boundary hedgerows with occasional trees.</p> <p>Retention and rehabilitation of as much of the site boundary vegetation as practicable, supplemented by additional appropriate tree and shrub planting, in keeping with the field boundary characteristics typical of the wider village locality. Raising the height of the nearby spur hedgerow north of The Elms and to the east of the Site, which is owned by the applicant.</p>

LANDSCAPE ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION
	<p>Raising the height of the north-eastern site boundary hedgerow to 2.5 metres above adjacent ground level.</p> <p>Planting a new native-species hedgerow with occasional trees to demarcate the western site boundary, which is currently formed by two parallel timber post-and-wire fences. Planting a new hedgerow separating the proposed orchard from the new house curtilage. Planting occasional native trees as standards at irregular intervals along the north-eastern boundary hedgerow and the spur hedgerow to the east. Planting a new fruit tree orchard within the northern part of the Site.</p>
<p>Overall Landscape Sensitivity of Site: in relation to ability to accommodate development of the scale, nature, and extent envisaged</p>	<p>Medium <i>Reasoning:</i></p> <p>The scale of the landscape around Eardisland is small-medium, with local buildings, woodland, tree, and hedgerow cover restricting views both into, out from, and around the village.</p> <p>The proposed small-scale development site is partially enclosed by mature trees and curtilage vegetation, tall existing mature field boundary vegetation, and built form.</p> <p>A single dwelling with a detached garage of the scale and type proposed would not be out of character in this edge-of-village context and contiguous with part of the western boundary of the designated Conservation Area. The small-scale proposed development could be readily assimilated within the local landscape setting, with the retention and enhancement of existing trees and hedgerows where practicable, supplemented by significant amounts of appropriate new hedgerow, hedgerow tree, specimen tree, and orchard planting.</p>

Visual Baseline

Visual Receptors

- 4.28 Residential receptors are amongst the most sensitive to visual impacts.
- 4.29 *Residential Properties:* Eardisland is a small village which has, for the most part, a nucleated form of settlement, straddling the River Arrow. Only four properties nearby on the eastern side of the main road face towards The Elms. There are partial views towards the proposed development site, which is screened by existing buildings, mature trees, and curtilage vegetation at The Elms, as well as intervening hedgerows with occasional trees. Those properties on the western side of the main road at Orchard Green have their rear aspects facing The Elms, but there are no views from their rear ground floor windows or garden curtilages because of an intervening earth bank and associated hedgerow and shrub vegetation - refer to **Appendix, Figure JCA/05: Landscape Context Photographs (1) – Photograph C2**. Further north on the main road, properties on the western side of the road have no views from their ground floor windows and rear curtilages because of intervening

boundary and curtilage vegetation. There are no views towards the Site from residential properties to the south-west of Orchard Green along the cul-de-sacs known as Green Elms and Haven Drive, because of intervening built form and dense boundary vegetation.

- 4.30 *Public Rights of Way:* There is a single local public right of way which crosses the Site: Eardisland Footpath 7 (reference Nr ED7) – refer to **Appendix, Figure JCA/01: Landscape Context & Assessment Viewpoint Locations**. This footpath links Eardisland to Pembridge. The footpath has a wicket gate in the western boundary fence of the main road through the village. From here it runs westwards across pasture grassland fields to meet the north-eastern site boundary hedgerow. The path passes through this broad hedgerow via two wicket gates, joined by a short plank bridge, immediately after which it turns sharply north-westwards. It then traverses the north-eastern section of the site which is the proposed location for an orchard. At the northernmost extremity of the Site, the boundary is crossed via another wicket gate. From here, the route of the path is west-north-west along the northern edge of the adjoining arable field. There are close-range partial views of the Site obtainable by westbound users from that section of the footpath between the wicket gate in the C1035 road boundary and the spur field boundary hedgerow running north from the curtilage of The Elms (a distance of around 102 metres. West of this point, as far as the north-eastern Site field boundary hedgerow, there are direct close-range views of more of the Site obtainable by westbound users, over a distance of some 77 metres. Between the wicket gate on the western side of this boundary hedgerow and the wicket gate in the northernmost part of the Site boundary, the footpath traverses the proposed development Site, within the northern section which is proposed for the planting of a fruit tree orchard. There are close range views obtainable by users in both directions of travel over a distance of around 94 metres. To the north-west of the Site, there are partial views of the Site from the footpath obtainable by eastbound users over a distance of about 132 metres. There may also be some glimpsed partial views of the Site from the only other public right of way footpath in the vicinity, ED6, where it runs along the north bank of the River Arrow before joining Broome Lane (C1035) to the west of the road bridge.
- 4.31 *Surrounding Public Roads:* There are partial direct close-range oblique views towards the Site only from the adjacent section of the main public road through the village (C1035), from the access drive to The Elms to the point where public footpath ED7 joins the road, a distance of around 38 metres. From elsewhere along this road, there are no views of the Site because of a combination of intervening built form, mature curtilage vegetation, woodland, lines of trees and tall boundary hedgerows flanking the road. There are some partial oblique views of the Site obtainable from a section of the C1035 road (Broome Lane) between Eardisland and Pembridge to the west of the village. This road is mostly flanked by woodland or tall mature field boundary hedgerows, so the views are occasional, with the slightly longer open section occurring at the bridge over the River Arrow which has a metal post-and-rail parapet.

5. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

5.1 The elements of the development under consideration which have been used to inform this Appraisal have been assumed as follows, based upon the '*Site Plan as Proposed*' (*Drawing Nr P003, Revision D*) dated July 2023, prepared by Natural Modern Studio architects:

- There would be one single-storey detached house comprised of three ranges – central, southern, and northern - located within in the lower section of the Site, with the main aspect facing west;
- A single detached garage would be constructed close to the south-eastern corner of the southern range, facing onto a parking area and a turning head; the proposed house and garage would be served by a new driveway leading off the existing private access road which serves The Elms;
- Construction materials would be appropriate to the local context;
- Each building would have a pitched roof, with a ridge height not exceeding 7.3 metres from ground level;
- The northern section of the Site beyond the proposed house garden curtilage would be planted as a fruit tree orchard, with a new beech hedgerow demarcating the boundary between the two.

Mitigation

5.2 There are essentially two categories of mitigation measures:

- *Primary* measures that intrinsically comprise part of the development design through an iterative process;
- *Secondary* measures designed to specifically address the remaining (residual) negative (adverse) impacts of the final development proposals.

This Landscape and Visual Appraisal relates to the predicted residual effects which remain with the proposed both primary and secondary mitigation measures in place – *refer to Appendix, Figure JCA/11: Proposed Soft Landscape Scheme (Drawing Nr 2301TEE.LS.01)*.

5.3 Primary Measures for the proposed development include:

- The siting of the proposed development in a location which would fit within the existing structure of the landscape, and which would respect the pattern and character of the settlement. This development would fit within the form of the settlement and the scale and nature of the proposed house, garage, and related infrastructure would not materially influence the character of the surrounding land;
- Retaining and enhancing the existing boundary hedgerows and trees, wherever practicable;
- The siting, scale and form of the prospective buildings and their landscape setting have been designed to be mutually harmonious and respectful of the context of the village landscape.

Secondary measures include:

- Soft landscape and boundary materials which would be selected to be sympathetic to local landscape character;

- Raising the top height of the north-eastern boundary hedgerow to a height of 2.5 metres above ground level. Raising the height of the spur hedgerow in the field to the east of the Site to 2.5 metres above existing ground level, and planting native-species trees at irregular intervals along its length;
- Planting of a new mixed native-species boundary hedgerow with occasional trees along the western boundary of the house curtilage, currently demarcated by two parallel timber post-and-wire fences;
- Enhancement of retained field boundary hedgerows by supplementary planting of native-species trees, including pedunculate oak, field maple, white willow, and small-leaved lime. These would assist in assimilating the new houses into the local landscape;
- The planting of appropriate new specimen trees around the edge of the proposed access driveway;
- The planting of a new orchard of fruit trees (apple, pear, and damson) in the northern section of the Site, retaining the public right of way footpath on its current alignment.

6. MAGNITUDE AND OVERALL LEVEL OF EFFECTS

Elements of the Proposed Development which have the Potential to cause Landscape and/or Visual Effects

- 6.1 The following is a schedule of the main elements of the proposed development that would have the potential to cause landscape and/or visual effects:
- Erection of site compound, temporary storage areas, safety fencing and the construction of temporary access routes, structures, and facilities, including topsoil and subsoil stockpiles; associated movement of vehicles, plant, and machinery;
 - Construction of a new access driveway and other infrastructure; associated movement of vehicles, plant, and machinery;
 - Potential effects on the present landscape character of the Site and the surrounding area;
 - Potential effects on public visual receptors in the landscape and private views from nearby local properties.

Assessment of Effects on the Landscape Resource

- 6.2 Landscape effects are defined as changes in the elements, characteristics, and qualities of the landscape because of development. These effects can be positive, negative, or neutral. When identifying and assessing landscape change, it is important to consider the existing trends for change within the landscape, which may be due to natural processes or human activities. The small field to the south of The Elms, and backing onto Orchard Meadow and Green Elms, has been granted planning consent for the construction of ten houses with associated highway infrastructure and landscaping (September 2016).
- 6.3 There will be effects on the landscape fabric of the Site during the construction phase because of vegetation removal, ground disturbance, temporary site works (including the stockpiling and storage of construction materials and stripped topsoil and excavated subsoil), formation

of access routes and the associated activities of delivery vehicles, plant, and machinery such as earthmovers, excavators, and materials-handling vehicles. Disturbance will be short term, and all temporarily affected surfaces will be restored on completion of construction.

Effects on Landscape Character

- 6.4 The Site lies wholly within the *Natural England National Character Area 100, Herefordshire Lowlands* (National Character Area Profile on Natural England website, published 2014). This is a geographically very extensive Character Area and the local context for the proposed development is an extremely small constituent part of the land encompassed by NCA 100, which stretches as far north as the outskirts of Ludlow, Shropshire, south-westwards as far as the River Wye near Hay-on-Wye, and south-eastwards and eastwards to Hereford and Ledbury. One of the identified 'Key Characteristics' of particular relevance to the context of the proposed development site is considered as follows:

*'Pasture with occasional wet meadows and permanent grassland along the rivers. Low hedgerows with sparse tree cover. Arable cultivation on lower-lying land.'*²²

The River Arrow is located just to the north of the proposed development site and much of the intervening land is comprised of pasture grassland which is liable to flooding. Hedgerows are the dominant field boundary feature. Tree cover is in the form of occasional hedgerow trees, as well as small groups and linear stands of deciduous woodland. Arable land is located on the higher land immediately to the west of the Site. The proposed development would take place within the existing field boundaries. The proposed incorporation of a new field boundary hedgerow with trees along the western house curtilage boundary would create a feature which is entirely in keeping with the local landscape character and would enhance the local landscape, as would the proposed supplementary planting of hedgerow trees and the raising of the top height of existing boundary hedgerows.

*'Localised traditional and bush orchards and occasional hop fields planted with windbreaks.'*²³

The proposed development includes a new fruit tree orchard to be planted in the northern section of the Site. This would re-introduce a feature which was formerly more common in this area of Herefordshire. These measures combined would make a very small contribution to the enhancement of this important element of landscape character, as noted within the NCA 100 descriptions.

- 6.5 Reference has already been made to the *Herefordshire 2009 Landscape Character Assessment* published as *Supplementary Planning Guidance* (LCASPG 2009). This assessment places the Site wholly within a small area of the 'Principal Settled Farmlands' 'Landscape Type'. The 'Character Description' for this Landscape Type quoted in paragraph 4.18, above, notes that these are:

'...settled agricultural landscapes of dispersed, scattered farms, relic commons and small villages and hamlets. The mixed farming land use reflects the good soils on which they are typically found. Networks of small winding lanes nestling within a matrix of hedged fields are characteristic. Tree cover is largely restricted to thinly scattered hedgerow trees,

²² *Natural England* website interrogated 17th July 2023

²³ *Ibid.*

*groups of trees around dwellings and trees along stream sides and other watercourses..... This is a landscape with a notably domestic character, defined chiefly by the scale of its field pattern, the nature and density of its settlement and its traditional land uses. Hop fields, orchards, grazed pastures and arable fields, together make up the rich patchwork which is typical of Principal Settled Farmlands.'*²⁴

- 6.6 In the paragraphs below, we have selected those sections of the *Principal Settled Farmlands* Landscape Type supporting information most relevant to the proposed development. We have highlighted in **bold type** those aspects of the landscape character guidance to which we wish to draw particular attention in this Appraisal.

'FORCES FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE

The pattern of small to medium sized hedged fields is vulnerable to change as the tendency towards arable dominance reduces the functional need for hedgerows. In spite of the Hedgerow Regulations, inappropriate maintenance is still resulting in the degradation and loss of the hedgerows which are one of the most significant features of the landscape. Intensification of farming practices is also resulting in a simplistic visual uniformity as landscape character is eroded. Development pressure in many of these areas has resulted in a distinctly nucleated or clustered settlement pattern which is contrary to the landscape character.'²⁵

- 6.7 **JCA Commentary:** The proposed development would take place within existing field boundaries. All existing field boundary hedgerows would be retained and enhanced by raising their top heights to 2.5 metres above adjacent ground level, together with supplementary planting of appropriate native tree species. A new mixed native-species hedgerow with occasional trees would be planted along the western house curtilage boundary, superseding the existing timber post-and-wire fences - refer to **Appendix, Figure JCA/11: Proposed Soft Landscape Scheme** (Drawing Nr 2301TEE.LS.01). The proposed development would be very small in scale. It would not make any substantial difference to the existing overall landscape scale or pattern, but it would result in a small but perceptible increase in the amount of local hedgerow and tree cover.

'SETTLEMENT PATTERN

*The dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads and hamlets is capable of accommodating limited new development if it is in accordance with UDP policy. Low densities of individual dwellings would be acceptable as long as they are not sited close enough to coalesce into a prominent wayside settlement pattern. **Additional housing in hamlets and villages should be modest in size in order to preserve the character of the original settlement.***²⁶

- 6.8 **JCA Commentary:** The proposed very small-scale development would form a very minor and contiguous local extension to a small, nucleated settlement. The proposed siting and layout of the house and garage would be sympathetic to the local landscape character. Planning consent has been granted for ten detached houses on land immediately to the south of The Elms which has no intervisibility with the proposed development site.

²⁴ Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment, Supplementary Planning Guidance; updated 2009; section 7.21, p.69

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.70

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.70

'WOODLAND OR TREE COVER PATTERN

Tree cover is most notable along stream sides and watercourses, with only scattered tree cover along hedgerows. Groups of trees and orchards are often associated with settlements. Woodland is not a characteristic feature of this Landscape Type.'²⁷

- 6.9 **JCA Commentary:** The Site reflects the above observations. Additional tree cover along hedgerows – both as supplementary planting and as new tree planting – will be occasional. The proposed new fruit tree orchard in the northern section of the Site is an appropriate addition to the local landscape.

'MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

The overall strategy for Principal Settled Farmlands would be to conserve and enhance the unity of small to medium scale hedged fields. Opportunities for new tree planting should be concentrated along watercourses where the linear tree cover pattern could be strengthened. Additional tree planting in the vicinity of settlement would also be appropriate and would assist in emphasising the domestic quality of the landscape. New woodland should not be introduced as it is out of place and would compromise the landscape character. The mixed farming land use is becoming increasingly arable and the small permanent pastures are gradually declining. These are often species rich and initiatives to safeguard them should be strongly promoted. New development should remain at a low density with most housing associated with existing hamlets and villages.'

28

- 6.10 **JCA Commentary:** The proposed development would be set within part of an existing grassland currently in agricultural use, with all existing boundary hedgerows retained, and so would conserve the existing small scale field pattern. Tree planting would occur as occasional standards within the proposed new western house curtilage boundary hedgerow, and as supplementary planting to the north-eastern boundary hedgerow and a spur hedgerow close by to the east of the Site. Specimen trees would also be planted along the edge of the new driveway. Orchard trees would be planted within the northern section of the Site, with the existing pasture grassland retained beneath the orchard and in those areas of the field not planted, to be managed by grazing of sheep. Species planted would include oak, field maple, white willow, and small-leaved lime. The development would thus be in keeping with the local field pattern and scale, with a landscape treatment which would reinforce this effect, thus locally enhancing the setting of the village, and so the site design would respond positively to the above Management Guidelines as set out in the LCASPG 2009.

Massing and Scale in the Surrounding Landscape

- 6.11 The proposal is for a small development which would constitute a minor local extension contiguous with the western edge of the village. It would be at a scale in keeping with that of Eardisland village and the surrounding rural landscape. Although the proposed development would involve the loss of part of a grassland field, the development could provide an integrated sustainable use for the land. Overall, it is considered that the potential

²⁷ Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment, *op.cit.*; section 7.21, p.70

²⁸ *Ibid.*

massing and scale of the development would have, at most, a *minor adverse* landscape effect. This effect would not be substantial.

Physical Landscape Effects on Topography

- 6.12 The construction of the proposed development would involve minor local alterations to ground levels to accommodate the house, garage, and related infrastructure. Physical changes to topography from the development as envisaged are therefore assessed as being *negligible adverse* and so these landscape effects would not be substantial.

Vegetation

- 6.13 The existing field boundary hedgerows on the Site would be retained and enhanced, by planting native hedgerow shrubs and occasional native trees. A section of new native-species hedgerow with occasional trees would be planted to demarcate the western garden boundary of the house curtilage. A beech hedge would be planted along the northern house curtilage boundary separating it from the proposed orchard.
- 6.14 Further specimen trees would be planted at appropriate locations within the proposed development. A new orchard of apple, pear, and damson trees would be planted within the northern section of the Site.
- 6.15 This framework of retained, enhanced and new vegetation would both assimilate the development into its immediate surroundings and would make a small positive contribution to the amount of local tree and hedgerow cover in this part of the village's landscape setting. The overall predicted effects on vegetation are therefore assessed as being *minor beneficial* but not substantial.

Public Rights of Way

- 6.16 One existing public right of way crosses the Site. This would be retained on its existing alignment and there would therefore be *no effects* on this element of the landscape resource.

Effects on the Visual Setting of Heritage Assets

- 6.17 The visual settings of the nearest Listed Buildings in the wider locality would be completely unaffected by the potential development, as a consequence of the separation distances involved and the nature and extent of intervening buildings, landform or vegetation cover, or a combination of these factors.

Overall Landscape Effects

Overall Landscape Sensitivity

- 6.18 The Site and its immediate vicinity is regarded as being of *medium* overall landscape sensitivity to the type of development proposed (*see Table 6, above*).

Overall Magnitude of Change

- 6.19 While all of the existing landscape features will be retained on the boundaries, construction of the houses and associated works will involve a *major* magnitude of change on the Site itself.

Overall Magnitude and Level of Landscape Effects

- 6.20 Given the *medium* overall sensitivity of the landscape receptor and the *major* landscape magnitude of change, the predicted overall level of effect on the landscape of the Site is *moderate adverse*, and substantial during the construction stage and on completion of construction. The development as envisaged would lead to some loss of openness within the Site itself. However, the careful layout and siting of the house and garage in the southern section of the Site, combined with new and enhanced boundary hedgerows and appropriate tree and orchard planting within the Site, would result in a design which is compatible with the surrounding land uses and with the character of the settlement. The residual landscape effects on the site and its immediate vicinity, once all of the proposed mitigation measures have taken effect, would be *minor beneficial* but not substantial.

Assessment of Visual Effects of the Prospective Development

General

- 6.21 Visual effects are defined as changes in the appearance of the landscape because of development. This can be positive (beneficial or an improvement), or negative (i.e. adverse or a detraction). The assessment of visual effects describes:
- The changes in the character of the available views resulting from the development;
 - The changes in the visual amenity of the visual receptors.

A series of representative viewpoints have been established to inform the visual assessment - refer to **Appendix, Figure JCA/01: Landscape Context & Assessment Viewpoint Locations**. The summary of the predicted visual effects from these viewpoints is set out in *Table 7, below*.

Table 7: Viewpoint Assessment Summary

Nr	Location	Designation	Receptor(s)	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Effect	Overall Level of Visual Effect
					[During Construction/At Completion/With Mitigation]	[During Construction/ At Completion/ With Mitigation]
VP1	C1035 main road through Eardisland, opposite the existing access drive to <i>The Elms</i> , in front of the <i>Old Post Office</i> (Listed Building) c.150 metres distant	Residential Public Road	Residential Road Users	High* Medium	Minor adverse	Moderate-Minor adverse
					Minor adverse	Moderate-Minor adverse
					Negligible adverse	Minor-negligible adverse
						<i>Not Substantial</i>

Nr	Location	Designation	Receptor(s)	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Effect [During Construction/At Completion/With Mitigation]	Overall Level of Visual Effect [During Construction/ At Completion/ With Mitigation]
VP2	C1035 main road through Eardisland, opposite the existing access drive to The Elms, in front of 4 <i>Glebe Cottage</i> c.150 metres distant	Residential Public Road	Residents Road Users	High* Medium	Minor adverse Minor adverse Negligible adverse	Moderate-Minor adverse Moderate-Minor adverse Minor-negligible adverse <i>Not Substantial</i>
VP3	Public footpath (ED7) E of the NE site boundary c.72 metres distant	Public Right of Way	Recreational Users	Medium	Moderate adverse Moderate adverse Minor adverse	Moderate-Minor adverse Moderate-Minor adverse Minor adverse <i>Not Substantial</i>
VP4	Public footpath (ED7) on adjacent land NW of site c.141 metres distant	Public Right of Way	Recreational Users	Medium	Moderate adverse Moderate adverse Minor adverse	Moderate-Minor adverse Moderate-Minor adverse Minor adverse <i>Not Substantial</i>
VP5	Public road C1035, Broome Lane, at bridge over the River Arrow c.172 metres distant	Public Road	Road Users	Medium	Minor adverse Minor adverse Negligible adverse	Minor adverse Minor adverse Negligible adverse <i>Not Substantial</i>

* Assessed as being the worst-case scenario, i.e. on residential receptors, having the higher level of ascribed sensitivity.

Residential Receptors

- 6.22 Residential receptors are amongst the most sensitive to visual effects. In accordance with GLVIA 3rd Edition, the assessment of visual effects is based on the likely view(s) obtainable from ground floor rooms that are normally occupied during daylight hours, or from within the curtilage of these properties.
- 6.23 The great majority of the houses within Eardisland village would be unaffected by visual impacts from the proposed development located on its western periphery. This is largely because of its nucleated settlement pattern, combined with the nature and extent of curtilage and boundary features, including the hedgerow, woodland, and tree cover present in and around the village.

- 6.24 Several houses set along the eastern side of the main public road through the village have some view towards the proposed development site. These are Burcott Cottage, Cobblers Cottage and the Old Post Office, three contiguous houses, all of which are Grade II Listed Buildings. There are direct, partial views of the Site from some ground floor windows and the front curtilages of these houses, around 150 metres from the nearest boundary of the Site. The views are only partial, because of existing boundary and curtilage vegetation at The Elms and along its access drive, as well as intervening field boundary hedgerows and occasional trees.
- 6.25 During the construction stage, the likely magnitude of the change in views obtainable from these residential properties is predicted to be *minor adverse*, largely emanating from the site clearance and construction activities and the related movement of vehicles, plant, and machinery. Upon completion, the magnitude of change would remain as *minor adverse*, and then reduce to *negligible adverse* once the proposed landscape treatment has become fully established. The resultant residual visual effects on these *high* sensitivity visual receptors would therefore be *minor-negligible adverse* and so *not substantial*. Viewpoint 1 is located on the southbound footway to the main road, almost opposite the existing access drive serving The Elms. The photograph and text at assessment **Viewpoint 1** have been included to illustrate some of these points – refer to **Appendix, Figure JCA/06: Assessment Viewpoint 1**; and **Figure JCA/04: Landscape Context Photographs (1) – Photograph C3**.
- 6.26 Nearby to the north, separated by a narrow access lane, are Glebe Cottage (Numbers 2, 3, and 4) and Thistlewell Cottage. There are oblique, partial views of the Site from some ground floor windows and the front curtilages of these houses, around 150 metres from the nearest boundary of the Site. The views are only partial, because of existing boundary and curtilage vegetation at The Elms, as well as intervening field boundary hedgerows and occasional trees.
- 6.27 During the construction stage, the likely magnitude of the change in views obtainable from these residential properties is predicted to be *minor adverse*, largely emanating from the site clearance and construction activities and the related movement of vehicles, plant, and machinery. Upon completion, the magnitude of change would remain as *minor adverse*, and then reduce to *negligible adverse* once the proposed landscape treatment has become fully established. The resultant residual visual effects on these *high* sensitivity visual receptors would therefore be *minor-negligible adverse* and so *not substantial*. Viewpoint 2 is located on the southbound footway to the main road (in front of 4, Glebe Cottage) opposite the small grassland field adjoining the road boundary, the northern edge of which is traversed by the route of public right of way footpath ED7. The photograph and text at assessment **Viewpoint 2** have been included to illustrate some of these points – refer to **Appendix, Figure JCA/06: Assessment Viewpoint 2**; and **Figure JCA/07: Landscape Context Photographs (1) – Photograph C3**.

Public Rights of Way

- 6.28 There will be some effects on views obtainable by users of the route of the public right of way footpath ED7. This links Eardisland to Pembridge village, some 2.25km distant to the west. Clear direct views of the Site are obtainable by westbound footpath users at the boundary between the small grassland field adjoining the main road and the grassland field adjoining the north-eastern boundary of the Site. A section of this footpath passes through the northern area of the proposed development Site, the part which is to be planted as a small fruit tree orchard. There would be direct close-range views from this footpath in line with the direction of travel. Beyond the northernmost edge of the Site, public footpath ED7 runs roughly westwards along the northern edge of the adjacent arable field, from which there are partial close-range view of the Site until it crosses the boundary into the edge of the River Arrow floodplain, from where the Site is screened by intervening topography and tree cover. There are partial views of the Site from this section of the route.
- 6.29 The photograph and text at Assessment **Viewpoint 3** have been included to illustrate some of these points in relation to westbound users close by to the east of the Site boundary – *refer to the **Appendix, Figure JCA/08: Viewpoint 3***. Viewpoint 3 is located on the line of the footpath just to the north of the spur field boundary hedgerow running north from The Elms, around 72 metres distant from the nearest part of the site boundary. The filtered views into the Site obtainable from this route are obtainable through the intervening mature hedgerow with trees which forms the north-eastern site boundary. The gable end of the northern range of the house would be partially visible. In winter, part of the central range of the house would also be partly visible. The visual sensitivity of these local footpath users is judged to be *medium*.
- 6.30 During the construction stage, the likely magnitude of the change in views obtainable from this section of the public footpath is predicted to be *moderate adverse*, largely emanating from the site clearance and construction activities and the related movement of vehicles, plant, and machinery. Upon completion, the magnitude of change would remain as *moderate adverse*, and then reduce to *minor adverse* once the proposed landscape treatment has become fully established. The resultant residual visual effects on this *medium* sensitivity visual receptor would therefore be *minor adverse* and so *not substantial*.
- 6.31 From that section of the public footpath ED7 to the north-west of the Site, views towards the Site are obtainable by eastbound users. The photograph and text at Assessment **Viewpoint 4** have been included to illustrate some of these points in relation to westbound users close by to the west of the western Site boundary – *refer to the **Appendix, Figure JCA/09: Viewpoint 4***. Viewpoint 3 is located on the line of the footpath to the west of the wicket gate in the field boundary at the northernmost edge of the Site, around 40 metres west of the wicket gate. This location is around 141 metres distant from the site of the proposed house. The visual sensitivity of these local footpath users is judged to be *medium*. The western and northern elevations of the proposed house would be partially visible from here, at an angle to the direction of eastbound travel. These would be seen in the context of the nearby buildings at The Elms, together with views of the houses along the eastern side of the main road and at Orchard Green.

- 6.32 During the construction stage, the likely magnitude of the change in views obtainable from this section of the public footpath is predicted to be *moderate adverse*, largely emanating from the site clearance and construction activities and the related movement of vehicles, plant, and machinery. Upon completion, the magnitude of change would remain as *moderate adverse*, and then reduce to *minor adverse* once the proposed landscape treatment – new boundary hedgerow and tree planting, and the fruit tree orchard - has become fully established. The resultant residual visual effects on this *medium* sensitivity visual receptor would therefore be *minor adverse* and so *not substantial*.

Public Roads

- 6.33 There would be some partial direct close-range views obtained by road users on the main road through Eardisland, perpendicular to the direction of travel or oblique, and seen through the Intervening curtilage and boundary vegetation at The Elms. The photographs and text at Assessment **Viewpoints 1 & 2** have been included to illustrate some of these points – *refer to Appendix, Figures JCA/06 & 07: Assessment Viewpoints 1 & 2; and Figure JCA/05: Landscape Context Photographs (1) – Photographs C1 & C3*. The magnitude of change in the views obtainable by users of this road would be, at most, *moderate adverse* during construction. On completion, the magnitude of change in view would remain *moderate adverse*, reducing to *negligible adverse* once the proposed mitigation planting scheme has become established. The predicted residual visual effects on these *medium* sensitivity receptors are therefore *negligible adverse* and so *not substantial*.
- 6.34 There would be some partial glimpsed medium-range views obtained by road users - perpendicular to the direction of travel or oblique and seen through the intervening tree cover along the north-eastern site boundary – of the C1035 road (Broome Lane) running west from Eardisland village towards Pembridge. Viewpoint 5 is located on the north side of this road at the bridge over the River Arrow, at around 172 metres distant from the nearest part of the site boundary. This is one of the few places along the road where there are open views to the south towards The Elms. The photograph and text at Assessment **Viewpoint 5** have been included to illustrate some of these points – *refer to the Appendix, Figure JCA/10: Viewpoint 5*. The magnitude of change in the view obtainable by the users of this minor road would be, at most, *minor adverse* during construction. On completion, the magnitude of change in view would remain, at most *minor adverse* and would reduce to *negligible adverse* once the proposed mitigation planting scheme has become established. The predicted residual visual effects on these *medium* sensitivity receptors are therefore *negligible adverse* and so *not substantial*.

- 6.35 There are no views of the Site from any other public road within the wider locality.

7. LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY

- 7.1 This section highlights the aspects of planning policy which are relevant to the landscape appraisal of the proposed development. There are also short commentaries on how the prospective development would relate to the policies.

National Landscape Planning Related Policy

- 7.2 The relevant national planning policy framework is provided principally by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021. This sets out the Government's economic, environmental, and social planning policies for England, and their vision for sustainable development. At the heart of the NPPF (at paragraph 11) is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, unless:

*'i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
ii any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.'*²⁹

JCA comments on relationship of development with guidance

- 7.3 The prospective development approach takes full account of this guidance. The site selection itself and the proposed layout design has been informed by a full understanding of the context and character of the landscape within and around Eardisland village. The objective has been to minimise the adverse effects and optimise the potential benefits to the local landscape character. A sustainable development can be achieved in landscape terms.

Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy

- 7.4 A Local Plan is currently being prepared for Herefordshire. It is made up of a number of documents including the Core Strategy. This document sets the overall strategic planning framework for the county up to 2031 and was adopted on 16 October 2015. Policies of relevance to landscape issues at the proposed development site at Eardisland are:

'Policy SS6 - Environmental Quality and Local Distinctiveness

Development proposals should conserve and enhance those environmental assets that contribute towards the county's distinctiveness, its settlement pattern, landscape, biodiversity and heritage assets and especially those with specific environmental designations. In addition, proposals should maintain and improve the effectiveness of those ecosystems essential to the health and wellbeing of the county's residents and its economy. Development proposals should be shaped through an integrated approach to planning the following environmental components from the outset, and based upon sufficient information to determine the effect upon each where they are relevant:

- *landscape, townscape and local distinctiveness, especially in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;*
- *biodiversity and geodiversity especially Special Areas of Conservation and Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*
- *historic environment and heritage assets, especially Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings;*
- *the network of green infrastructure;*
- *local amenity, including light pollution, air quality and tranquillity;*
- *agricultural and food productivity;*
- *physical resources, including minerals, soils, management of waste, the water environment, renewable energy and energy conservation.*

The management plans and conserve on objectives of the county's international and nationally important features and areas will be material to the determination of future development

²⁹ National Planning Policy Framework; Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government; OGL 2021

proposals. Furthermore, assessments of local features, areas and sites, defining local distinctiveness in other development plan documents, Neighbourhood Development Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents should inform decisions upon proposals.'

JCA comments on the relationship of the proposed development to this policy:

- 7.5 Development of the Site, as proposed, would be in line with this policy. The development proposals under consideration have been developed from a thorough understanding of the landscape baseline, and detailed reference has been made to the adopted Herefordshire Landscape Character SPG and the adopted Eardisland Neighbourhood Development Plan to 2031. No heritage assets would be adversely affected by the development as envisaged. Where practicable, existing landscape features would be conserved, and the Site's landscape would be enhanced by appropriate planting of new mixed native-species hedgerows, specimen tree planting of appropriate species, and a small fruit tree orchard.

Policy LD1 – Landscape and Townscape

'Development proposals should:

- demonstrate that character of the landscape and townscape has positively influenced the design, scale, nature and site selection, protection and enhancement of the setting of settlements and designated areas;*
- conserve and enhance the natural, historic and scenic beauty of important landscapes and features, including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, nationally and locally designated parks and gardens and conservation areas; through the protection of the area's character and by enabling appropriate uses, design and management;*
- incorporate new landscape schemes and their management to ensure development integrates appropriately into its surroundings; and*
- maintain and extend tree cover where important to amenity, through the retention of important trees, appropriate replacement of trees lost through development and new planting to support green infrastructure.'*

JCA comments on the relationship of the proposed development to this policy:

- 7.6 The site layout and design respond appropriately to the local context, especially the village's nucleated settlement pattern and the degree of enclosure by curtilage and boundary vegetation cover. The setting of the village and notable views within it would not be compromised. New planting would increase the extent of - and enhance the condition of - local tree and hedgerow cover at the western edge of the village. The proposed orchard would provide a further enhancement to the village landscape and its setting.

Policy LD3 – Green Infrastructure

'Development proposals should protect, manage and plan for the preservation of existing and delivery of new green infrastructure, and should achieve the following objectives:

- 1. identification and retention of existing green infrastructure corridors and linkages; including the protection of valued landscapes, trees, hedgerows, woodlands, water courses and adjoining flood plain;*
- 2. provision of on-site green infrastructure; proposals will be supported where this enhances the network; and*
- 3. integration with, and connection to, the surrounding green infrastructure network.'*

JCA comments on the relationship of the proposed development to this policy:

- 7.7 The proposed development would respond positively to the specific qualities of the Site and its context at the western edge of Eardisland village. No public access route would be adversely affected. No proposed green space would be adversely affected. The proposed planting scheme would create additional habitat and habitat linkages, thus enhancing local biodiversity, and would be in keeping with local landscape character.

Neighbourhood Development Plan for Eardisland Parish

- 7.8 Neighbourhood Plans will form part of the statutory development plan for Herefordshire. There is a Neighbourhood Development Plan in place for Eardisland Parish. This is the *Eardisland Neighbourhood Development Plan to 2031*, adopted in October 2016 (Eardisland NDP).
- 7.9 The Eardisland NDP notes, in relation to the description of the history and characteristics of present-day Eardisland, that:
- ‘While timber framed houses, of which Eardisland has some outstanding examples, are regarded as the local vernacular, Eardisland village and the wider parish display styles of building periods from mediaeval times until the present day.’³⁰*
- 7.10 The Eardisland NDP Policies considered to be most relevant to the consideration of the landscape and visual effects of the proposed development are as follows:
- Policy E1 – General Development Principles
 - Policy E2 – Protecting Heritage Assets
 - Policy E3 – Landscape Character
 - Policy E9 – Scale and Type of New Residential Development
 - Policy E11 – Protection of Local Green Spaces
 - Policy 12 – Public Rights of Way/Connectivity.

JCA Commentary:

- 7.11 Policy E1 contains eleven criteria which all new development must meet; criteria (e), (g), (h), and (i) are particularly relevant to the proposed development. The proposed development would meet each of these criteria. In addition, the proposed development would meet the following additional criteria which seek to *‘protect and enhance the unique identity of the parish’*: criteria (m), (n) and (p).³¹
- 7.12 Policy E2 states that *‘all new development will be required to preserve and enhance the positive attributes of our heritage assets and their settings.’*³² The proposed development does not lie within the visual setting of any Listed Building or Scheduled Monument. It would not adversely affect the designated Conservation Area or its setting.

³⁰ *Eardisland Neighbourhood Development Plan to 2031, adopted October 2016 October 2021*; paragraph 5.2

³¹ *Eardisland NDP, op.cit.*, pp.18-19

³² *Ibid.*, p.19

- 7.13 Policy E3 states that *'all new proposals should show regard to the distinctive landscape character of the Herefordshire Lowlands Character Area...'*³³ The proposed development has been evolved with reference to landscape character as one of the baseline conditions for this LVA, in accordance with current best practice for landscape and visual impact assessment. The proposed development would meet all of the stated criteria set out under Policy E3.
- 7.14 Policy E9 states that new housing development will only be supported in accordance with nine specific criteria. The proposed development would meet all of the stated criteria which relate to landscape and visual effects: (d), (e), and (i).
- 7.15 Policy E11 lists eight *'local green spaces designated in accordance with paragraphs 76 and 77 of the NPPF.'*³⁴ The small grassland field adjacent to the access drive to The Elms and fronting onto the main road is included on this list, being referred to as *'Land adjacent to The Elms drive'*. The proposed development would have no effects on this designated area of local green space.
- 7.16 Policy E12 states that *'Proposals for the enhancement and improvement of the existing Public Rights of Way will be supported.'*³⁵ The proposed development meets criterion (c) in providing new and enhanced hedgerows and a new orchard alongside its route within and close to the east of the Site

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 A detailed Appraisal has been carried out of the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed development to construct a single-storey detached dwelling, together with a detached garage, an access drive and related infrastructure, on a site adjacent to The Elms at Eardisland. This study has been carried out in accordance with the general principles of nationally agreed 'best practice' standards of landscape and visual assessment. It has involved an examination of various published data about the Site, including maps, aerial photographs, a landscape character assessment published as Supplementary Planning Guidance, and planning background information. An experienced Chartered Landscape Architect has carried out a detailed inspection of the Site, and its surrounding landscape, looking at its present condition and at the likely effects predicted to arise from the development as envisaged, and with appropriate suggested mitigation measures implemented in full.
- 8.2 Likely landscape and visual effects have been assessed, taking into account the construction stage, immediately after construction, and when the proposed mitigation planting has become fully established. The Appraisal does take account of the full range of appropriate mitigation measures which are being considered.
- 8.3 The Appraisal of the development has evolved out of a proper understanding of landscape character, referring in detail to the updated Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment

³³ *Ibid.*, pp.20-21

³⁴ *Eardisland NDP, op.cit.*, p. 31

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.33

Supplementary Planning Guidance. The prospective development would respect and enhance the local landscape character of the Principal Settled Farmlands Landscape Type within which Eardisland village is located. The nucleated nature of the settlement pattern would be retained. The retained and enhanced field boundary hedgerows, together with the proposed additional and supplementary hedgerow and tree planting, would be in keeping with the character of this area of the village and its setting.

- 8.4 There would be very minor changes to the topography within this gently sloping site, in order to accommodate the houses and the access driveway.
- 8.5 The protection, retention, and enhancement of the existing mature landscape features wherever practicable is an important feature of the proposed landscape and visual mitigation. A landscape framework of retained and new tree and hedgerow planting, together with a small orchard, will help to visually contain the development within the immediate site environs, and to assimilate it into the village setting and the wider local landscape to the west of the village.
- 8.6 Residential receptors are amongst the most sensitive to visual effects. There are seven nearby properties immediately adjacent to the eastern side of the main road to the east and south-east of the Site with partial views of the Site. In each case, these visual effects would *not be substantial*.
- 8.7 There would be *no substantial residual adverse visual effects* on road users in the vicinity.
- 8.8 There would be *no substantial residual adverse visual effects* on the amenity of the users of the local public rights of way network. Planting proposals will enhance the views from the public footpath within and to the east of the Site, once fully established.
- 8.9 There would be *no effects* on the visual settings of the four nearest Listed Buildings, the closest of which are around 150 metres distant; they are separated from the Site by intervening built form, trees, and both curtilage and field boundary hedgerow vegetation.
- 8.10 The overall conclusion is that this prospective development proposal complies with the raft of applicable national, regional, and local planning policies related to the landscape. The proposed development at the Site on adjacent to The Elms at Eardisland would be carried out in a manner which does not compromise the village character or its landscape setting.