7.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

Introduction

7.1 This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been carried out for the Proposed Development by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd (FPCR). The purpose of this LVIA is to provide an assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development. The landscape and visual effects have been considered in relation to the proposals detailed in Chapter 4 which sets out the parameter plans, highway access drawings and the supporting illustrative plans comprising the Illustrative Concept Masterplans and the Green Infrastructure Plan.

7.2 In accordance with the EIA Regulations, the LVIA and ES chapter have been carried out in accordance with guidance of the professional institution, the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', third edition (GLVIA3), published in 2013 by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.

Legislation and Policy

National Planning Policy Framework[1]

7.3 The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policy and in combination these policies give the Government's vision of sustainable development. The NPPF emphasises the need for well-designed places, promoting healthy and safe communities and conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

7.4 Regarding landscape and green infrastructure, the Natural Environment section of the NPPF provides a policy context for the countryside and green infrastructure. The key objectives include protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and, minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.

7.5 Paragraph 180 states at part a) that planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance valued landscapes and goes on to clarify that this should be in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan. Part b) states that planning policies and decisions should recognise *"the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside"*.

7.6 Paragraph 181 advises that:

"Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries".

7.7 Paragraph 182 goes on to add:

"Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues", and

"The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas."

7.8 The site is within an undesignated landscape with no special protected status and is not in the setting of a nationally designated landscape. The character of the site and its immediate context is assessed within this Chapter to help inform decisions regarding "*the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside"*. The potential to enhance green infrastructure networks is also considered.

Planning Practice Guidance

7.9 The PPG was first published on 6th March 2014 and is a regularly updated online planning resource which provides guidance on the NPPF and the planning system.

7.10 The PPG provides guidance on landscape related matters including 'design' and the 'natural environment', and includes guidance on green infrastructure, biodiversity net gain, trees and woodland, and landscape, as well as guidance on good design with reference to available tools such as the National Design Guide.

Adopted Local Plan

7.11 The adopted Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011-203[2] allocates the Site for development at Policy HD6. It sets out the following policies of relevance to landscape and visual matters:

HD6 - Southern Urban Expansion (Lower Bullingham)

7.12 The Site is located within this policy area which is allocated for provision of: a minimum of 1000 houses, around 5 hectares of employment land, a park and choose, a primary school, community hub, a country park and green infrastructure corridors. The policy requires the following -

"Land at Lower Bullingham will deliver a comprehensively planned sustainable urban expansion. The new development will be sensitively integrated into both the existing urban fabric of Hereford, and the wider landscape, through high design and sustainability standards."

7.13 With regards green infrastructure the policy expects the development within the allocation to provide:

- *Green infrastructure corridors through the area to include strategic greenways along Red Brook and Norton Brook and links with Withy Brook;*
- *Creation of a country park to incorporate new footpaths linking with the existing public right of way network in the locality, woodland and orchard planting;*
- *The provision on site of appropriate sports and play facilities, open space, community orchards and allotments;*
- *Sustainable urban drainage and flood mitigation on solutions to form an integral part of the green infrastructure network;*

7.14 Supporting paragraphs 4.2.87-89 state:

"The Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis highlights the southern section of the site is of higher landscape sensitivity and is vulnerable to change, forming part of rising land to Dinedor Hill. This will require careful design in any masterplan. The protection of the setting of the Iron Age hill fort, Dinedor Camp, and the ridge extending eastwards into Rotherwas Park requires careful consideration as part of the master planning process. The expansion area is however, largely contained to the south by the Rotherwas Access Road, which effectively forms a visual barrier to the more sensitive landscape beyond.

The expansion area will need to be designed to incorporate a network of green infrastructure. This will serve as biodiversity and landscape enhancement corridors as well as sustainable transport routes. The Green Infrastructure Strategy has highlighted a strategic corridor along Red Brook, Norton Brook and Withy Brook as an enhancement zone. Opportunities for enhancement include reinforcing the biodiversity value of the linear features including the railway and water corridors and establishing landscape buffer areas. Further green infrastructure will need to be provided to safely connect the new homes to the country park proposed as part of the urban extension and other community facilities in the locality. Opportunities to link heritage assets as part of the green infrastructure network should also be explored.

The existing rural nature of Watery Lane and Lower Bullingham Lane should be protected and will provide new opportunities for sustainable transport links to connect to wider footpaths to Dinedor Hill, the historic Hill Fort, Rotherwas Park and beyond".

LD1 – Landscape and Townscape

7.15 The policy wording states:

"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."*

7.16 Paragraph 5.3.9 of the supporting text refers to the Landscape Character Assessment SPD 2009 but acknowledges that this will be reviewed during the plan period.

LD3 – Green Infrastructure

7.17 The policy wording states:

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

- *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;*
- *Provision of on-site green infrastructure; in particular proposals will be supported where this enhances the network; and*
- *Integration with, and connection to, the surrounding green infrastructure network."*

7.18 Paragraph 5.3.22 of the supporting text adds:

"The inclusion of new planting, wildlife enhancement, creation and links, links to the countryside and river ways, green transport corridors, open spaces and recreational facilities and sustainable drainage systems within or associated with development proposals are important and valuable contributions to green infrastructure. Landscaping of development sites should feature planting of

appropriate native species wherever possible, ensuring there is sufficient space for plants to grow to maturity. Opportunities for new elements include establishing grasslands, wildflower meadows, wetlands, orchards or woodland. New green infrastructure features could include promoting and extending the public rights of way network, increasing public access and providing interpretive information".

Other relevant policy, legislation or guidance

7.19 The Herefordshire Council website lists the following as *'Local Plan evidence base – current documents':*

- Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis: Hereford and the Market Towns[3]
- Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment 2023[4]
- Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (GBI) 2023

7.20 These documents supersede the now archived documents listed below, which were referred to in the ES Scoping report and were current at the time of writing:

- Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Guidance (updated 2009)
- Green Infrastructure Strategy Herefordshire

7.21 The 2023 documents have therefore been considered in relation to landscape and visual matters and have informed the Masterplan and green infrastructure proposals for the Proposed Development.

Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment, 2023

7.22 This document forms a part of the evidence base to support the emerging Local Plan 2021 – 2041. It provides an update to the now archived 2009 Supplementary Planning Guidance document. The purpose of the document is described at paragraph 1.3 as:

"It is intended to both inform work on policy development and development management, guiding development that is sympathetic to local character and the qualities of the landscape. It can help inform locational policies for strategic development as well as appropriate design and mitigation, providing baseline evidence for more detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)".

7.23 This is discussed further within the Baseline section of this chapter.

Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis: Hereford and the Market Towns

7.24 Herefordshire Council produced an Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis: Hereford and the Market Towns in January 2010, a technical paper to support the Strategic Housing Land Availability

Assessment, with the aim of assessing and classifying the level of sensitivity of land within the urban fringe landscape of towns within Herefordshire. The Analysis is based upon the Landscape Character Types defined in the Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment (2004). This is discussed further within the Baseline section of this chapter.

Herefordshire Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (GBI) 2023

7.25 This document forms a part of the evidence base to support the emerging Local Plan 2021 – 2041 and is intended to provide a framework to guide sustainable development. It provides an update to the now archived Green Infrastructure Strategy (2010). This is discussed further within the Baseline section of this chapter.

Assessment Methodology and Significance Criteria

Scope

7.26 This Chapter provides an assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development on the Site and it's immediate and wider context.

7.27 To determine the extents of the context (the Study Area) a preliminary Zone of Theoretical Visibility[5] (ZTV) was prepared digitally to establish the potential visible extents of the Site within a 5km radius of the centre of the site (baseline). The baseline ZTV is indicated on **Figures 7.5 and 7.6**. In response to this ZTV the site context was then defined as the extents of the localised ZTV shown on **Figure 7.5.**

Assessment approach

7.28 This LVIA has been prepared based upon the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, third edition (GLVIA3), published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, in 2013. The assessment will also accord with the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note, Statement of Clarification 1/3 (2013); Technical Guidance Note 06/19, Visual representation of development proposals; and Technical Guidance Note 02/21, Assessing landscape value outside of national designations (2021).

7.29 In summary, the GLVIA3 states:

"Landscape and Visual impact assessment (LVIA), is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity." (GLVIA3 paragraph 1.1.)

7.30 There are two components of LVIA:

- *"Assessment of landscape effects; assessing effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right;*
- *Assessment of visual effects: assessing effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people."* (GLVIA3 paragraph 2.21.)

7.31 The components of this Chapter include: baseline studies; description and details of the landscape proposals and mitigation measures to be adopted as part of the Proposed Development; identification and description of likely effects arising from the Proposed Development; and an assessment of the significance of these effects.

7.32 In terms of baseline studies, the assessment provides an understanding of the landscape that may be affected, its constituent elements, character, condition and value. For the visual baseline this includes an understanding of the area in which the development may be visible, the people who may experience views, and the nature of views.

Assessment of Landscape Effects

7.33 GLVIA3 states that *"An assessment of landscape effects deals with the effects of change and development on landscape as a resource"* (GLVIA3 paragraph 5.1).

7.34 The baseline landscape is described by reference to existing published Landscape Character Assessments and by a description of the site and its context.

7.35 A range of landscape effects can arise through development. These can include:

- Change or loss of elements, features, aesthetic or perceptual aspects that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the landscape;
- Addition of new elements that influence character and distinctiveness of the landscape;
- Combined effects of these changes.

7.36 The characteristics of the existing landscape resource are considered in respect of the susceptibility (high, medium, or low) of the landscape resource to the change arising from this development. The value of the existing landscape is also considered. Landscape receptors are assessed in terms of their 'Landscape Sensitivity'. This combines judgements on the value (High, Medium, or Low) to be attached to the landscape and the susceptibility to change of the landscape from the type of change or development proposed. The definition and criteria adopted for these contributory factors is detailed in **Appendix 7.1.**

7.37 The magnitude of landscape effects is the degree of change to the landscape receptor in terms of size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. This may be High, Medium, Low, Negligible or none. In terms of size or scale of change, the judgement takes account of the extent of the existing landscape elements that will be lost or changed, and the degree to which the aesthetic or perceptual aspects or key characteristics of the landscape will be altered by removal or addition of new elements. Geographical extent is considered by reference to the extent of the area over which there will be a change. Duration is considered for the landscape effects, with short term effects being defined as those lasting less than 5 years, medium term effects lasting between 5 and 10 years and long-term effects being defined as anything over 10 years in duration.

7.38 The level of effect is determined by considering the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of effect on the landscape. This overall judgement is formed from a reasoned professional overview of the individual judgements against the assessment criteria. Final conclusions on the overall landscape effects are drawn from the assessment components described. This assessment describes the nature of the landscape effects (Major, Moderate, Minor or Negligible), and whether these are adverse or beneficial, at the following stages of development; construction, completion (year 1) and longer term (year 15).

7.39 The criteria used in the assessment are set out in **Appendix 7.1.**

Assessment of Visual Effects

7.40 An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. This assessment describes the nature of the visual effects and, whether these are adverse or beneficial, at the following stages of development; construction, completion (year 1 winter) and longer term (year 15 summer).

7.41 The first stage in the assessment is to identify approximate visibility/ visibility mapping. This is done by either a computerised ZTV, or by manual methods using map study and field evaluation. A series of viewpoints are included within the assessment that are representative of views towards the Site from surrounding visual receptors. Other views of the Site are included where it supports the description and understanding of the Site's landscape and visual characteristics.

7.42 The views also typically represent what can be seen from a variety of distances from the Proposed Development and different viewing experiences.

7.43 It is important to remember that visual receptors are all people. For each affected viewpoint the assessment considers visual sensitivity which results from both the susceptibility to change in views and the value attached to views.

"The visual receptors most susceptible to change are generally likely to include:

- *Residents at home;*
- *People, whether residents or visitors, who are engaged in outdoor recreation, including use of public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape or particular views;*
- *Visitors to heritage assets or to other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience;*
- *Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area;*
- *Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes tend to fall into an intermediate category of moderate susceptibility to change. Where travel involves recognised scenic routes awareness of views is likely to be particularly high."* (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.33.)

"Visual receptors likely to be less sensitive to change include:

- *People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape;*
- *People at their place of work whose attention may be focused on their work or activity, not on their surroundings, and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life(although there may be on occasion be cases where views are an important contributor to the setting and to the quality of working life."* (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.34.)

7.44 Each of the visual effects is evaluated in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration or reversibility (the magnitude of change).

7.45 In terms of size or scale, the magnitude of visual effects takes account of:

- *The scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including proportion of the view occupied by the Proposed Development;*
- *The degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line height, colour and texture;*
- *The nature of the view of the Proposed Development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpses.* (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.39)

7.46 The geographical extent of the visual effect in each viewpoint is likely to reflect:

- The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;
- The distance of the viewpoint from the Proposed Development;
- The extent of the area over which the changes would be visible.

7.47 As with landscape effects, the duration of the effect could be short to long term or permanent and the same definitions apply. The criteria used in this assessment are set out in **Appendix 7.1.**

Overall Landscape and Visual Effects

7.48 The final conclusions on effects, whether adverse or beneficial, are drawn from the separate judgements on the sensitivity of the receptors and the magnitude of the effects. This overall judgement is formed from a reasoned professional overview of the individual judgements against the assessment criteria; this differs from the matrix approach outlined in the general methodology set out in Chapter 2: Approach to EIA.

7.49 GLVIA3 notes, at paragraphs 5.56 and 6.44, that there are no hard and fast rules with regard to the level of effects, therefore the following descriptive thresholds have been used for this Chapter, in line with the general methodology as set out at Chapter 2: Approach to EIA:

- Major;
- Moderate;
- Minor;
- Negligible.

7.50 Where it is determined that the assessment falls between or encompasses two of the defined criteria terms, then the judgement may be described as, for example, Major/ Moderate or Moderate/ Minor. This indicates that the effect is assessed to lie between the respective definitions or to encompass aspects of both.

Significance criteria

7.51 A judgement is reached, based on the assessment, as to whether an effect is significant or not. Those degrees of effects that are considered to be significant by the assessor for this LVIA are judged to be effects that are either Major or Major/Moderate. This differs from the general methodology outlined in Chapter 2 where Moderate and above is generally significant.

7.52 GLVIA3 Statement of Clarification 1/13 (2013)[6] notes that:

"Concerning 'significance', it is for the assessor to define what the assessor considers significant…Depending on the means of judgment and terminology (which should be explicitly set out), effects of varying degrees of change (or levels of change), may be derived. The assessor should then establish (and it is for the assessor to decide and explain) the degree or level of change that is considered to be significant." (GLVIA3 Statement of Clarification, § 3.)

Significance of Landscape Effects

7.53 GLVIA3 states, at paragraph 5.56, that:

"There are no hard and fast rules about what makes a significant effect, and there cannot be a standard approach since circumstances vary with the location and context and with the type of proposal. At opposite ends of the spectrum it is reasonable to say that:

- *Major loss or irreversible negative effects, over an extensive area, on elements and/ or aesthetic and perceptual aspects that are key to the character of nationally valued landscapes are likely to be of the greatest significance;*
- *Reversible negative effects of short duration, over a restricted area, on elements and/ or aesthetic and perceptual aspects that contribute to but are not key characteristics of the character of landscapes of community value are likely to be of the least significance and may, depending on the circumstances, be judged as not significant;*
- *Where assessments of significance place landscape effects between these extremes, judgements must be made about whether or not they are significant, with full explanations of why these conclusions have been reached."* (GLVIA3 paragraph 5.56.)

Significance of Visual Effects

7.54 GLVIA3 states, at paragraph 6.44, that:

"There are no hard and fast rules about what makes a significant effect, and there cannot be a standard approach since circumstances vary with the location and context and with the type of proposal. In making a judgement about the significance of visual effects the following points should be noted:

- *Effects on people who are particularly sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity are more likely to be significant;*
- *Effects on people at recognised and important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes are more likely to be significant;*

Large-scale changes which introduce new, non-characteristic or discordant or intrusive elements into the view are more likely to be significant than small changes or changes involving features already present within the view." (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.44.)

Consultation

7.55 As part of the scoping and pre-application process Herefordshire Council (HC) were consulted on a series of proposed representative views for the assessment. The agreed Viewpoints are included within the LVIA along with several additional views picked up during the Site visit.

Uncertainties and Limitations

7.56 The photographs for the assessment are taken from publicly accessible locations only, as is standard accepted practice. Therefore, any assessment of visual effects on private receptors (views from residential properties or scheduled monuments without public access) is based upon the nearest available public view at ground level.

Baseline Conditions

Landscape Baseline

Published Landscape Character Documents

7.57 This Section should be read in conjunction with **Figure 7.2: Landscape Character.**

National Landscape Character

7.58 National Character Area (NCA) profiles have been prepared by Natural England for the 159 NCA's defined across England. These NCA profiles include a description of the natural and cultural features that shape the landscape, how the landscape has changed over time, the current key drivers for ongoing change, and a broad analysis of each area's characteristics.

7.59 At this very broad landscape scale, most of the Site falls within the very northern edge of National Character Area (NCA) 104 South Herefordshire and Over Severn[7]. The eastern edge of the Site and adjacent land, Rotherwas Industrial Estate and the town of Hereford fall within NCA 100 Herefordshire Lowlands[8]. Both NCAs stretch across extensive landscape tracts, nevertheless many of the key characteristics for NCA 104 are of relevance and include:

- *"An undulating landscape with some prominent rounded Old Red Sandstone hills in the west…*
- *Well-wooded character created by larger woodlands confined to the steeper slopes adjacent to the flood plain and to hillsides. Smaller tree clumps often found in groups around hill tops, farmsteads, hamlets and prominent buildings including small areas of ornamental parkland-style planting and scattered parklands.*

- *Numerous mature and over-mature trees along hedgerows and watercourses including ash, oak, alder and some pollarded willows.*
- *Large-to-medium-sized fields dominate the intensive arable farming on the fertile soils of the lower undulating ground and river valleys.*
- *Key transport routes run north–south and east–west linking larger settlements (Newent, Woolhope and Dymock) with the principal town Ross-on-Wye and Monmouth, Gloucester and Hereford in neighbouring NCAs.*
- *Hill-top iron-age forts, motte-and-bailey castles and moated sites are found scattered throughout the area".*

7.60 Within the NCA104 profile, whilst no direct reference is made to the adjacent town of Hereford or to development relating to the settlement, Natural England identify some 'Opportunities' of relevance to the Site. These include generally expanding and restoring the currently much-fragmented semi-natural habitats, managing and restoring field boundaries, managing and creating areas of semi-natural grassland and riverside meadows, securing the new generation of replacement hedgerow trees, and taking opportunities to improve recreational access whilst balancing with biodiversity objectives.

7.61 The neighbouring NCA 100 profile refers to Hereford as a historic market town and principal settlement in the NCA. Opportunities identified for NCA 100 of relevance to the Site include:

- *"Enhance green infrastructure links between the urban centres and wider countryside and develop and enhance green infrastructure within the urban areas using sustainable building methods, implementing the aim and objectives of the Herefordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy. Urban expansion of Leominster and Hereford needs to sensitively incorporate development into surrounding countryside and secure green infrastructure benefits for urban communities.*
- *Maximise opportunities for recreation and enjoyment of nature, particularly along the river valleys, linked by sustainable transport networks".*

<u>*Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment (2023)*</u>

7.62 The Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment (HLCA) has been undertaken at a county level and updates the now archived 2009 report. The new HLCA identifies 14 landscape character types (LCTs) across the county. The Site falls within LCT2: 'Lowland Farmlands', the extents of which are described in Table 5.1 of the report as "*Open lowlands extending from Hereford associated with the Upper Wye, Lower Lugg and its tributaries the Arrow and Frome*".

7.63 At paragraphs 7.17 and 7.18 the 'location and summary' description for LCT2 is:

"The Lowland Farmlands LCT is defined by the extent of the open low-lying 'basin' in the centre of the county. Its boundaries are marked by the change to the more wooded landcover and undulating topography of the surrounding wooded farmland and hills. The LCT is interrupted by the wide River Floodplains (LCT 1) that cross the landscape and Wooded Sandstone Hills (LCT 12) that rise steeply above the central plain.

This rural lowland landscape has dispersed historic villages and hamlets. The south and north of the landscape character type are influenced by proximity to Hereford City and Leominster. The landscape has a gently undulating landform where fertile soils support a variety of agricultural land uses".

7.64 The 'key landscape qualities and sensitivities' are summarised as:

- *Remaining areas of traditional enclosure including medium scale fields bound by native hedgerows which provide landscape structure and a sense of history.*
- *The diversity of agricultural land use, with arable fields, commercial and traditional orchards, and sheep grazing, that provide visual interest within the landscape.*
- *The numerous traditional orchards that provide cultural and biodiversity value.*
- *The working agricultural landscape that forms a rural setting to historic buildings and villages (many designated as Conservation Areas).*
- *The dispersed settlement pattern of villages, hamlets and farmsteads linked by narrow winding lanes that provide a scenic quality to the landscape.*
- *The traditional local vernacular of black and white timber frame buildings, sandstone and red brick that provide strong a sense of place.*
- *The network of rights of way that provide access to the countryside and recreational value.*
- *The long views across the lowlands and to the surrounding wooded hills.*
- *The rural character of the landscape, with its strong sense of tranquillity and dark night skies.*

7.65 Under the heading 'Forces for Change' the report says:

"Development pressure, particularly extending from Hereford and west of Leominster and associated traffic, is also resulting in visual intrusion from urban development. Conversion of traditional farm buildings to residential or holiday use can be unsympathetic. Large agricultural buildings, solar panels, and polytunnels can be out of character within this open landscape, with their increased use having a cumulative impact".

7.66 Under the heading 'Development Management' the report includes the following guidelines for LCT2:

- *Conserve the area's archaeological sites and defensive historic monuments and their landscape setting. Encourage further interpretation and understanding of these.*
- *Conserve the historic settlement pattern of small historic villages, hamlets and farmsteads.*

- *Conserve the local distinctiveness of historic buildings and their landscape settings.*
- *Ensure that new development considers the appropriate scale, mass, distinctive styling, colour, layout and materials to be in keeping with the existing settlement character and landscape setting, to build on the strong sense of place. Refer to the Herefordshire Design Code.*
- *Consider the visual impact of roof, facades, glazing, pavements and other architectural detailing on the rural character of the landscape.*
- *Integrate existing and new development within the landscape by using native hedgerows, trees and woodlands.*
- *Consider the impact of commercial polytunnels, buildings and solar panels on the landscape and seek to integrate these structures through appropriate siting and mitigation.*
- *Protect the expansive views across the landscape, across the adjacent river floodplains and outwards to the surrounding wooded hills.*
- *Consider the visual impact of development, particularly large-scale urban expansions from Hereford and Leominster, on the open landscape of this lowland farmland.*
- *Conserve the pattern of narrow winding lanes ensuring that their character is not lost through unsympathetic highway works, unnecessary signage, lighting, street furniture, or removal of hedgerow and trees.*
- *Protect and manage the valued recreational use of the landscape. Improve public right of way connections, infrastructure and signage and identify opportunities for green infrastructure.*
- *Ensure new development and infrastructure does not detract from the rural tranquillity and dark night skies experienced within the landscape.*

7.67 The Design Code referred to in the above text is not yet publicly available. Sensitivity has not been specifically assessed within the document.

Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis: Hereford and the Market Towns

7.68 Herefordshire Council produced an Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis: Hereford and the Market Towns in January 2010, a technical paper to support the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, with the aim of assessing and classifying the level of sensitivity of land within the urban fringe landscape of towns within Herefordshire. The Analysis is based upon the Landscape Character Types defined in the Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment (2004).

7.69 This document locates the Site within the Grafton-Lower Bullingham Landscape Zone, this is transcribed onto **Figure 7.2.** A sensitivity analysis divides the land further into sensitivity zones. Most of the site, comprising the area proposed for development, falls within 2b Grafton-Lower Bullingham. The document states that intensive arable use has degraded the character of this area,

the railway line has reduced visual cohesion and the large-scale industrial development at Rotherwas is a detractor.

7.70 The sensitivity mapping (Map 3.1) within the publication indicates that assessed sensitivity varies across Area 2b (see **Appendix 7.2**). The northern part of the Site falls within an area of medium-low sensitivity reflective of the above description for 2b. However, the southern part of the Site falls within an area indicated on the mapping as high-medium sensitivity. No specific written justification looks to be provided for this judgement and the document observes at paragraph 1.6.1 that: -

"For the purposes of clear graphic presentation there is no gradation in the level of sensitivity passing from one zone of sensitivity to another. However, it is recognised on the ground, in some areas, the landscape is experienced more subtly, with a gradation in sensitivity between one zone of land and another".

7.71 The western site parcel, proposed for the 'country park', along with land around Bullinghope and the enclosed commons around Green Crize fall within 5e Grafton – Lower Bullingham. Key landscape features in this area include Bullinghope and St Peter's Church on a prominent knoll of land. The sensitivity mapping indicates that Area 5e, is judged to be of high sensitivity.

Green Infrastructure Publications

Herefordshire Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy

7.72 Figure 1.1 of the document includes a user guide on how to use this Strategy. The Guide sets out a series of five steps for developers:

1. *Identify existing GBI assets (chapters 3-5)*
2. *Identify deliverable GBI opportunities (chapter 6)*
3. *Integrate GBI in initial design work*
4. *Develop design with input from stakeholders*
5. *Finalise proposals.*

7.73 A themed approach to identification of assets under the categories 'Place, Nature and People' and a series of principles are established for these, followed by a Vision and specific aims of the document. The overarching Vision for GBI in Herefordshire is to:

"Deliver a multifunctional and connected green and blue network to guide sustainable growth and support Herefordshire's wildlife and communities for the benefit of people, place and nature for present and future generations".

7.74 Chapter 3-5 identify the key 'Place, Nature and People' assets for the county respectively, and set out conclusions and next steps that relate to landscape character, climate change, heritage, designated site network, distinctive habitats, flood zones, phosphates and nitrate pollution, agriculture, biodiversity net gain, public rights of way, active travel, enhance the multifunctionality of open space, visitor pressure and quantity of accessible green space in market towns.

7.75 Chapter 6 identifies Strategic Priority GBI Zones. None of the GBI assets identified at Figure 6.1 directly relate to the Site context. It is noted that Figure 6.2 identifies Hereford as an area of GBI need, it states for Hereford:

"Low greenness and grid scores, pockets of IMD health deprivation, road noise, surface water flood risk and fluvial flooding associated with the River Wye."

7.76 On Figure 6.4 the Site falls within the 'Wye Valley Green – Blue Corridor' GBI Priority Zone. The 'Vision' for this zone is:

"Conserve and enhance the low-lying river corridor as a mechanism to improve connectivity, deliver diverse habitats and support thriving tourism".

7.77 A series of priority projects are summarised in Table 6.1 of the Strategy and cross reference to Figure 6.15. None specifically relate to the Site. Two nevertheless are of general relevance to landscape and visual matters and could be applied to the Site:

- WV5 Identify opportunities for wet meadows along the River Wye Corridor – this may include creation of additional areas of shallow pools and scrapes. Whilst this is of specific reference to the River Wye, it would no doubt also be beneficial in consideration of the Red Brook through the Site.
- WV6 Connect and enhance areas of existing riparian woodland. Again, this does not refer to the area in which the Site is located, but enhancements on Site would similarly deliver local benefits.

7.78 Finally, chapter 7 sets out a series of 'Process Principles' with a particular focus on delivery and funding, making recommendations for policy development.

Landscape Designations

7.79 Designations are shown on **Figure 7.3.**

7.80 The Site and its immediate context are not covered by any statutory or non-statutory landscape designations at either a National or Local level, such as National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Special Landscape Areas, or Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV).

7.81 The elevated north-western edge of the Wye Valley National Landscape (AONB) is over 3km away from the Site boundary, at its nearest point. The Grade II* Holme Lacy Registered Park and Garden (RPG) adjoins the National Landscape (AONB); it is not within the visual envelope for the Site.

7.82 The Dinedor Camp Scheduled Monument is positioned on the top of Dinedor Hill to the south of the Site. A small number of Grade II Listed buildings are present alongside Bullinghope Lane within Bullinghope, including St Peter's Church. A further listed building; a barn, is present within Green Crize.

7.83 Further afield, north of the River Wye, there are clusters of listed buildings and conservation areas across the central areas of Hereford, including the Grade I Listed cathedral.

7.84 This Chapter considers heritage assets as potentially sensitive features within the landscape only insofar as their potential bearing on landscape value, susceptibility to change and thus overall landscape sensitivity. The Chapter identifies and assesses the visual effects on people i.e. users of the assets, such as residents of listed buildings or users of publicly accessible heritage assets. Separate reports addressing heritage matters have been submitted as planning application documents.

Topography

7.85 The topography of the Site and the wider context is shown at **Figure 7.4.** The Site slopes gently from south-west at around 60-65m above ordnance datum (AOD) to north-east, around 50-55m, bisected by the Red Brook.

7.86 The part of the Site proposed for the country park falls from east to west from around 75 to 60mdown to the Norton Brook at the western boundary. The hamlet of Bullinghope is located just to the west on a prominent outcrop of land with a highpoint of 78m. Green Crize is located along a local ridge of land, at around 72-75m, between the two site areas.

7.87 South of the Site the landform rises steeply to the distinctive ridge of Dinedor Hill. Dinedor Camp is positioned on the highpoint of the ridge at 182m. Dinedor Hill forms the northernmost spur of a series of hills further to the south that include Ridge Hill and Aconbury Hill. The hills of the Wye Valley lie over 4km to the east of the Site.

7.88 To the north the landform falls gently to the River Wye which flows centrally through Hereford at around 50m before rising gently to the north through Hereford. Eign Hill, with a highpoint of 83m, is located on a low ridge of land which extends to the north-west through Hereford.

Local Landscape Character: Site and Immediate Context

7.89 The Site and immediate context are shown on the aerial photograph at **Figure 7.1.** An assessment of landscape character of the Site and its immediate context has been carried out, providing a finer level of assessment than the published studies.

7.90 The Site is predominantly large-scale arable farmland. Landscape features comprise field boundary hedgerows with occasional trees and the tree-lined Norton and Red Brooks. The Red Brook cuts centrally through the Site. The Norton Brook follows the western edge of the land proposed for the country park. Maturing tree planting defines the southern edge of the Site along the B4399 corridor. A public footpath (ProW) passes through the eastern part of the Site connecting across the B4399 from Dinedor Hill to Watery Lane. To the south-west a second PRoW links Green Crize to DInedor Hill, again crossing the B4399. A further PRoW, between Green Crize and Bullinghope, follows the northern boundary of the land proposed for the country park. A group of agricultural/industrial buildings are present within the south-eastern part of the Site.

7.91 The Site slopes gently from south-west to north-east, bisected by the Red Brook. The western part also falls from east to west and includes a section of the Norton Brook. The linear settlement area of Green Crize lies along a subtle ridge of land, which physically and visually separates the two Site areas. The Rotherwas Industrial Estate has an influence on the character of the eastern part of the Site, whilst residential areas of Lower Bullingham fall outside of the immediate Site context, just to the north of the railway embankment. To the west the hamlet of Bullinghope and St Peter's Church are located above the land proposed for the country park on a prominent outcrop of land, and whilst they define the context of this area, they have no bearing on the Site area to the east. South of the Site and B4399, the landform rises steeply to the distinctive ridge of Dinedor Hill, whilst this forms the backdrop to the Site and its immediate context, the landscape of Dinedor Hill itself is distinctly different to that of the Site and its immediate context.

7.92 There are views across the Site to the surrounding higher land, particularly prominent are Dinedor Hill and St Peter's Church. To the north, the city skyline is evident with glimpses of the Cathedral tower, the spire of All Saints Church and further east the wooded hilltop of Eign Hill.

7.93 The Site is quite closely contained by built form and landform between the railway line/Lower Bullingham residential areas, the Rotherwas Industrial Estate, the B4399/Dinedor Hill and Green Crize.

Landscape Value

7.94 In terms of "landscape value" it is appropriate to examine the role of the Site and its immediate context in terms of the range of local factors set out in LI TGN 02/21 and summarised in the

methodology. This considers the landscape in terms of a range of factors as set out below. As a starting point, landscape designations have been considered.

7.95 *Landscape Designations:* The Site and its immediate context (including its ZTV) (**Figure 7.5**) are not subject to any national, local or other landscape designations. The hills of Wye Valley National Landscape (AONB) form part of the wider context, providing a backdrop over 5km to the east of the Site.

7.96 *Natural Heritage:* Conservation interest is limited to the hedgerows, trees, watercourses and field margins that provide habitat for protected species. There are no habitat designations within the Site or its immediate context. The closest is the River Wye SSSI and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) to the north of the Site. Refer to the Chapter 8: Ecology and Nature Conservation for further information.

7.97 *Cultural Heritage:* There are no heritage designations within or adjacent to the Site. A Grade II listed building is present along Green Crize just east of the country park Site area and a small number of Grade II listed buildings within Bullinghope to the west, along with a scheduled monument - Bullingham Old Church. To the south Dinedor Camp scheduled monument sits atop Dinedor Hill.

7.98 *Landscape Condition:* The Site is in intensive arable use and is bound by hedgerows of varying condition, occasional hedgerow trees and riparian vegetation. Field sizes are large, and the landscape is open in nature with limited structural vegetation.

7.99 An Arboricultural Assessment report is included with the planning application and outlines the quality and condition of the trees and hedgerows within the Site. A total of fifty-one individual trees, twenty groups of trees and sixteen hedgerows were surveyed as part of the Arboricultural Assessment. Of these, eight trees were deemed to be Category A. None of the assessed trees were considered as ancient or veteran trees in accordance with our veteran survey methodology. No Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) have been identified on the Site. The summary of surveyed trees, states:

"4.5 Tree cover across the site represented a full range of age classes from young planted, mid age / early mature to full maturity and formed a mix of free-standing individual trees and larger groups of trees, particularly as linear belts of 'buffer planting' parallel to the Rotherwas link road (B4399) and along the section of Red Brook which passes through the application area on its western edge.

4.6 The distribution of trees was largely confined to the field boundaries by virtue of the arable nature of the land. Species were mostly native varieties including English oak, common ash, hazel and field maple. Where trees were present alongside the watercourse, riparian species predominate such as crack willow, goat willow and common alder.

4.7 Hedgerows were mostly comprised of native species including hawthorn, wych elm, blackthorn and elder amongst others and were well established.

4.8 The bus / cycle connection between Watery Lane and Rotherwas Industrial Estate will be secured by a condition and delivered via a S106 contribution from the Applicant as the land required sits within the ownership of Herefordshire Council (not forming part of the adopted highway). Species present in the vicinity of this link were mostly situated to the west of an existing track linking the lane to the estate and comprised largely sycamore, hawthorn and hybrid black poplar.

4.9 Note: the red line boundary also includes a small area on Watery Lane close to the railway underpass to accommodate an upgraded access for farm vehicles and a new vehicle by-pass facility for use by local residents along the Lane in times of flood. There were several trees associated with this part of the site, all of which were on the eastern side of Watery Lane, with only a hedgerow bounding the field on the western side".

7.100 A Soil Assessment report has been prepared for the Site by BWB and is submitted as a separate application document. Drawing 1 within the report maps the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) gradings for the Site, the Site comprises a mix of Grade 1 and 2 agricultural land. Most of the land proposed for the country park is Grade 3b, the southern tip of this land is Grade 1.

7.101 *Associations:* There are no known associations with the Site or the immediate context.

7.102 *Distinctiveness:* The Site is not considered to be rare or have any unusual landscape features, the agricultural fields, hedgerows, and watercourses are commonplace in this landscape and typical of the published landscape character area descriptions which apply to the Site.

7.103 *Recreational Value:* A public footpath (PRoW) crosses the B4399 into the eastern part of the Site from Dinedor Hill to the south and connects to Watery Lane. A further PRoW follows the northern edge of the field proposed for the country park. There is no further recreational use upon the Site.

7.104 *Perceptual (Scenic):* The Site is considered to be reasonably attractive and pleasant primarily greenfield land (with an area of brownfield) on the fringes of Lower Bullingham. It is subject to a number of urban influences including the adjacent Rotherwas Industrial Estate, the railway embankment with the residential settlement edge of Lower Bullingham beyond and the B4339 corridor. The Site is not considered to be of unusual scenic quality for the area, however the nearby St Peter's Church on a prominent outcrop of land and Dinedor Hill, which falls outside of the immediate context, are of local interest.

7.105 *Perceptual (Wildness and Tranquillity):* The Site is not considered to be particularly tranquil due to the proximity of the railway line, the B4339 and Rotherwas Industrial Estate.

7.106 *Functional Aspects:* The site falls within 'Wye Valley Green – Blue Corridor' GBI Priority Zone as defined within the Herefordshire GBI Strategy 2023. The Vision for this corridor is "Conserve and enhance the low-lying river corridor as a mechanism to improve connectivity, deliver diverse habitats and support thriving tourism". Whilst the focus is on the River Wye, the position of the Site, bisected by the Red and Norton Brook watercourses and north of Dinedor Hill presents local opportunities to deliver functional GBI benefits.

7.107 In conclusion and having appraised the above factors it is judged that whilst there is some variation across the Site as a whole, the Site and its immediate landscape context are of medium landscape value overall.

7.108 The susceptibility of the Site to change is judged to range from low – medium. The Site is of a mixed character with detracting and intrusive employment elements and a lack of coherence within the east, the railway line to the north and the B4399 to the south. Nevertheless, the Site also incorporates positive characteristics and features such as the Red and Norton Brook watercourses, associated vegetation and field boundaries, and public rights of way from where there are open views south to Dinedor Hill and north to Hereford.

7.109 In consideration of landscape value and susceptibility to change, the Site and its immediate context are judged to be of a Medium sensitivity overall.

Visual Baseline

7.110 A visual appraisal has been undertaken for the Site. This has explored the nature of the existing visual amenity of the area and sought to establish the approximate visibility of the Site from surrounding locations and receptors. A series of photo viewpoints have been selected which support this analysis.

7.111 Photographs have been taken to illustrate a view from a specific vantage point, or to demonstrate a representative view for those receptors that are moving through the landscape, e.g. rights of way users. The photographs demonstrate varying degrees of visibility and include both short and long-range views. The photographs were taken on 5th December 2023 and seasonal differences have been taken into account when determining the visual effects on these receptors.

7.112 'Photo Viewpoints', as referred to in this report are 'Type 1 Visualisations' or 'Annotated Viewpoint Photographs', as referred to in the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note on 'Visual Representation of Development Proposals' (TGN 06/19).

Photo Viewpoints

7.113 An assessment of the likely visual effects of the Proposed Development upon surrounding receptors is detailed in the subsequent section. **Figures 7.5 and 7.6** detail the location of the photo viewpoints and receptors and **Figures 7.7 – 7.27** illustrate the photo viewpoints. These are briefly described below.

7.114 Views 1-10 are taken from within and close to the Site peripheries. Views 1-3 are from Lower Bullingham Lane as it passes through the Site. The flat to gently sloping fields of the Site are to both sides of the lane, rooftops of properties within Lower Bullingham are visible beyond the vegetated rail embankment to the north and to the south is Dinedor Hill. Vegetation along Green Crize contains this settlement area and a single property; The Firs is evident. More distantly to the east Rotherwas Industrial Estate and Poplar Cottage border the eastern edge of the Site, with distant Wye Valley Hills beyond. From rising ground (View 3) elevated parts of Hereford are visible to the north, including Hereford Cathedral spire and Eign Hill.

7.115 View 4 is taken from public footpath 'Lower Bullingham Footpath 2' at a high point to the south of the Site. From this position several properties on Green Crize can be glimpsed beyond the field gate and The Firs is visible on lower ground to the north. Further north, elevated parts of Hereford are visible, Eign Hill and Hereford Cathedral are discernible. The Rotherwas Industrial Estate lies just beyond the Site to the east. To the southeast, views to the tree block adjacent to Dinedor Hill and the more distant hills of the Wye Valley National Landscape (AONB) are heavily filtered by winter tree cover.

7.116 View 5 is taken from a vehicle access at a highpoint off the B4339 and is not a public viewpoint. It is included for information. Taken from an elevated and open position at the southern edge of the Site it shows the view north across the Site north to Hereford and northeast to the Rotherwas Industrial Estate.

7.117 View 6 is taken from public footpath 'Lower Bullingham Footpath 1' within the Site. It shows the view north across the Site from lower ground close to the Red Brook. From this lower elevation rooftops of properties within Lower Bullingham are visible to the north above the vegetated railway embankment, but Hereford is less visible; the cathedral tower is discernible. Rotherwas Industrial Estate and several properties; Poplar Cottage and the White House, border the Site to the east.

7.118 View 7 is taken from the corner of Watery Lane adjoining the eastern Site boundary. The field in the foreground rises gently to the skyline and to the north the railway embankment and rooftops of properties in Lower Bullingham are visible. Dinedor Hill lies just to the south.

7.119 View 8 looks north along Watery Lane from a similar position to View 7. It shows the land use context adjacent to the eastern Site boundary. It was not possible to retake the photograph on the 2023 site visit due to road obstructions, therefore a previous photograph dating from 2017 has been utilised. It was observed during the site visit that other than the replacement of the closeboard fence with concrete fencing, there has been no notable change to the view since 2017. The Site is screened from view by a tall hedgerow.

7.120 View 9 is taken from the Rotherwas Industrial Estate to the east. The Site is screened by existing buildings to the Estate.

7.121 View 10 is taken from Watery Lane just south of the railway line, where a small strip of land which incorporates a gate, fence and remnant hedgerow is included within the red line for the Site. There is a glimpse view from the field gate across a field to the main Site beyond. Poplar Cottage can be seen in the view and Dinedor Hill beyond.

7.122 Views 11-13 are taken from peripheral and nearby roads. View 11 is from Hoarwithy Road, just north of the railway line, within Lower Bullingham. From the street, there is a glimpse view under the railway bridge, along Green Crize to the western edge of the Site with Dinedor Hill behind.

7.123 View 12 is from Bullingham Lane, south of the railway line. There is a glimpse view between properties across fields towards the Site. The Site is just visible distantly in the view, filtered by winter vegetation cover. It is unlikely to be visible in summer months when trees are in leaf.

7.124 Views 13 is taken looking east from the Green Crize bridge over the B4339. Looking east there is a glimpse view of a highpoint just west of the Site (on which VP 5 is located) close to the B4399. The remainder of the Site is screened from view by the roadside embankment and associated vegetation.

7.125 Views 14-16 consider the visibility of the land within the Site proposed for the country park.

7.126 Views 14 and 15 are taken from public footpath Grafton Footpath 1 which crosses the northern country park boundary. The view west from the footpath adjoining Green Crize shows an open view across the field proposed for the country park in the foreground to hills beyond. The view east from Bullinghope includes the same fields, Dinedor Hill to the southeast and Hereford to the north. The landform rises to a subtle ridge and the tree lined Green Crize runs along this, preventing views to the Site further to the east.

7.127 View 16 is taken from Bullingham Lane, adjacent to St Peter's Church. It shows the view south across a field to the southern edge of the field proposed for the country park. The Site area to the east is not visible.

7.128 Views 17-18 are taken from Dinedor Hill and view 19 from the Dinedor Camp Scheduled Monument. Rotherwas Industrial Estate can be seen with the Site located to the west. Views 17 and 18 are taken from public footpaths Lower Bullingham 1 and Dinedor Footpath 19 respectively. They show elevated, panoramic views north towards the Site from the north facing slopes of Dinedor Hill. The Site is visible on lower ground below, adjoining the residential areas of Lower Bullingham and the Rotherwas Industrial Estate. Hereford extends northwards.

7.129 From View 19, on the embankment of the scheduled monument, there are partial views to Lower Bullingham, Rotherwas Industrial Estate and the eastern field within the Site. Some vegetation clearance appears to have been undertaken since the previous site visit in 2017 and this has opened views up slightly from the footpath on the lower, north-eastern banked edge of the monument. The remainder of the scheduled monument continues to be contained within trees.

7.130 Views 20 – 22 are taken from Hereford and indicate generally limited visibility. These views show typical views towards the site in limited locations where a public street level view is available. View 20 is taken from Holme Lacy Road. The Site is generally screened by existing housing and the rail line. Views 21 & 22 are longer distance views, and their location is shown on **Figure 7.6**. View 21 is taken from Green Street and looks over field parcels to the north of the River Wye. The Site is screened by existing housing to the north of the Site. View 22 is taken from Princess Avenue. This is approximately 3.5km north of the Site. Dinedor Hill can be seen in the distance but the Site itself is screened and would form a minor element in the view.

7.131 Views 23 - 27 are long distance views, located between c. 2.2 and 6km from the Site boundaries. The viewpoint locations are shown at **Figure 7.6**. From these viewpoints the Site, if visible is a very distant, barely discernible minor component of the view, which is dominated by the hills and landscape in the foreground of the view.

7.132 View 23 is taken from 6km north of Hereford on the A4110, looking south across Hereford towards Dinedor Hill. The Site, on lower ground, is not discernible at this distance.

7.133 View 24 is from Callow, approximately 3km southwest of the Site. From here there is a distant panoramic view in which the western part of Hereford is discernible with St Peter's Church in front. The Site is screened from view by properties along the subtle crest of land defined by Green Crize and by the intervening higher land, including Dinedor Hill.

7.134 View 25 is approximately 3.5km southwest of the Site and taken from a PRoW (Aconbury Footpath 6) on Aconbury Hill just below the woodland that tops the hill. The intervening landform, including Dinedor Hill, prevents views of the Site, more distantly properties further to the north in Hereford are just discernible as a distant and very minor component of the panoramic view.

7.135 View 26 is taken from a high viewpoint within the Wye Valley National Landscape (AONB) some 5.3km to the east of the Site. The Rotherwas Industrial Estate and fields within the Site beyond are barely discernible as distant and minor components in the wider panoramic view.

7.136 View 27 is taken from Lugwardine some 4.6km north-east of the Site. From here there is an elevated, panoramic view towards Hereford. The Rotherwas Industrial Estate is distantly visible as a very minor component in the view, generally screening the Site from view beyond.

Summary of Visual Baseline

7.137 The table below summarises the conclusions of the baseline analysis and sets out the identified visual receptors and their overall sensitivity. The following text should be read in conjunction with **Figures 7.5 and 7.6** which identify the receptor locations:

Table 7.1: Identified Receptors and Judged Sensitivity

Recep	Description	Susceptibility to change	Value	Overall sensitivity
A1	Views from properties within Lower Bullingham are severely restricted by the vegetated railway embankment. There may be limited views from upstairs or attic windows	Medium	Medium	Medium
A2	More distantly residential properties in elevated parts of Hereford may have views to the more elevated southern parts of the Site.	Medium	Medium	Medium
B	There are open views across the Site from Lower Bullingham Lane	Medium	Medium	Medium
C	There may be views across a field within the Site from a single property; The Firs, Green Crize	Medium	Medium	Medium
D	There may be a glimpse north-east across fields to the Site from several properties on Green Crize. Properties along Green Crize will also have a range of views west across the field proposed for the country park.	Medium – High	Medium	Medium
D1	Road users on Green Crize currently have limited views across the Site via a gap in the roadside hedgerow.	Medium	Medium	Medium
E	There are elevated views north across the Site to Hereford from 'Lower Bullingham Footpath 2' (receptor E) south of the Site.	High	Medium	Medium / High
F	There are views across the Site from 'Lower Bullingham Footpath 1' as it passes through the Site.	High	Low/ Medium	Medium
G	There are views across the eastern fields of the Site from two residential properties on Watery Lane, adjoining the	Medium – High	Medium	Medium

	Site; Poplar Cottage and The White House.			
H	From Watery Lane there are glimpse views across the Site.	Low	Low – Medium	Low
I	From Rotherwas Industrial Estate there may be glimpse views across the Site.	Low	Low – Medium	Low
J	From properties on Bullingham Lane, north of Bullinghope, there may be filtered winter views of the Site beyond Green Crize, these views are likely to be screened in summer.	Medium	Medium	Medium
K	Views along the B4399 are screened by maturing roadside vegetation and the landform, a brief view of a highpoint immediately south of the Site is possible.	Low / Medium	Low / Medium	Low / Medium
L	Users of Grafton Footpath 1 have views south across the field proposed for the country park.	High	Medium	Medium / High
M	Residents of Bullinghope, including School House just to the west of the village may have views across the southern part of the field proposed for the country park.	Medium - High	Medium	Medium
N	Similar views are possible from the front of St Peter's Church.	High	Medium	Medium / High
O	Similar views are possible from public footpath ref 'Grafton Footpath 2' south of the church.	High	Medium	Medium / High
P	There are views across Hereford and Rotherwas Industrial estate which incorporate the Site from the northeastern edge of Dinedor Camp Scheduled Monument. The remainder of the monument is contained within trees.	High	Medium	Medium / High
Q	There are panoramic views across Hereford, Rotherwas Industrial Estate and the Site from Lower Bullingham Footpath 1 (south of B4399) and Dinedor Footpath 19. Similar views may be possible from north facing properties on this hillside.	High	Medium	Medium / High
	Four elevated, long-distance views towards the Site have been identified from the south-west, north and north-east as indicated on **Figure 7.6.** From these viewpoints the Site, if visible is a very distant, barely discernible minor component of the view, which is dominated by the hills and landscape in the foreground of the view. Identified receptors comprise –			
R	Views from the south-west	High	Medium	Medium / High

S	A viewpoint within the Wye Valley National Landscape (AONB)	High	High	High
T	Lugwardine	Medium – High	Medium	Medium
U	Elevated land north of Hereford	Medium – High	Medium	Medium

Potential Effects

Mitigation Measures

7.138 The landscape components of the scheme are an important integral part of the proposals and any necessary mitigation measures have been designed into the Proposed Development.

7.139 The Design and Access Statement (DAS) sets out how the built form of the Proposed Development will take reference from the best examples of local character and vernacular to ensure that the Proposed Development is well related to its context. For residential properties the choice of materials will reflect the colours of local brick, render and roof-tiles so that the built development is in keeping with the existing settlement characteristics. Properties will be predominantly two storeys (up to 9.5 metres) in height, with occasional 2.5 (up to 10.5 metres) storey buildings in suitable locations for placemaking purposes. Along the Spine Route and Gateway properties may be up to 3 storey (up to 12 metres) dwellings, as defined within the Design and Access Statement (DAS). Some remodelling of the existing ground levels will be necessary to achieve appropriate development platforms. Finished ground levels are not known at this stage and these could vary up to +/- 2 metres from the existing AOD heights.

7.140 The built form of the employment area is proposed in the DAS to be up to 12 metres above proposed ground level. Materials and colours are proposed to blend with the surrounding context with a mixture of red brick and appropriate cladding materials and pitched or flat slate tiled and composite metal roofs which have brise soleil/louvres on key frontages.

7.141 The building height parameters that are assessed within this Chapter are defined on the Scale Parameter Plan. The Parameter Plan notes that *"some re-modelling of the existing ground levels will be necessary to achieve appropriate development platforms. Finished ground levels are not known at this stage and these could vary up to +/- 2metres from the AOD heights shown."*

7.142 A ZTV plan has been prepared to show the potential zone of theoretical influence of these proposed Scale Parameters. This is described further within the visual assessment section.

7.143 The Design and Access Statement also sets out the proposed Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy for the Site. The GI Strategy Plan is included within the DAS and at **Appendix 7.5** of this Chapter. The

green infrastructure proposals that are embedded in the Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan and the concept masterplan are summarised in the following paragraphs.

Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy

7.144 The published landscape character assessments identify a need for new landscape structure, with particular emphasis on creation of green infrastructure links between town and countryside and on new tree planting, including along watercourses. The majority of the existing landscape features of the Site can be retained and will provide the basis for new green infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development, including the country park. The existing watercourses, PRoW, hedgerows and trees are key assets that will be retained wherever feasible and incorporated within the green infrastructure for the Site and country park.

7.145 The GI Strategy for the Site proposes a series of linked multi-functional spaces that will deliver landscape, amenity and biodiversity benefits as well as perform SuDS functions, responding to flood risk, pollution control and climate change issues.

7.146 The green spaces of the Site will be retained, seeded with locally appropriate grass seed mixes and managed as neutral meadow grassland, retained hedgerows will be reinforced and new native tree planting will be implemented around Site boundaries, within hedgerows and along the watercourse corridors to provide a robust landscape structure and extend and link the existing habitat network.

7.147 Existing rights of way will be retained, primarily within greenways, and a network of foot/cycle routes will provide new connections through the green spaces. Formal play provision will include a Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (NEAP) and two Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs). Across the green space areas views out from the Site to Dinedor Hill will help to reinforce local landscape character.

7.148 The fields within the country park will be converted to neutral grassland meadow and will incorporate new native hedgerow, riparian scrub / wet woodland, orchard and tree planting, pathways, seating, signage and interpretation boards. As well as enhancing the landscape around Bullinghope this will improve local habitat linkages, particularly benefitting the Norton Brook corridor.

7.149 At the reserved matters stage, detailed planting and management plans will be prepared that will set out how the above embedded strategy will be delivered. The plans will respond to the provisions of the 2023 Herefordshire Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy.

Assessment of effects

7.150 The following section outlines the likely landscape and visual effects that will arise from the Proposed Development taking account of the embedded mitigation as described above. Schedules detailing the likely landscape and visual effects for the receptors are included in **Appendices 7.3 and 7.4 respectively**. Please refer to these in conjunction with the following descriptions.

Landscape effects

7.151 The assessment of landscape effects should be read in conjunction with the Landscape Effects Table at **Appendix 7.3** and with **Figures 7.1-7.4** which describe the landscape character and topography of the Site.

Construction

7.152 A detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be prepared that will set out the details of the anticipated phasing of the works. It is anticipated that the CEMP will seek to adopt best practices and be agreed with the Local Planning Authorities and Statutory Bodies where necessary. The ES sets out key items for inclusion in the CEMP and an indication of phasing is described within Chapter 4: Description of the Proposed Development.

7.153 The Site is predominantly greenfield and should not require significant remediation works. It is assumed that a cut and fill balance will be achievable on Site and that construction will occur from sequentially across the Site from Q4 2025. It is assumed that the development platforms will be created to work with the natural contours of the Site and no significant earthworks are anticipated, other than for the construction of the SuDS swales and ponds.

7.154 The separate Flood Risk Assessment report includes an Illustrative Floodplain Management Strategy Plan at **Appendix 7** that identifies areas of the Site where floodplain compensation areas are proposed, this comprises lowering of ground levels within the proposed green space in the north of the Site to both sides of Lower Bullingham Lane and within a small area just south of the Red Brook. The Conceptual Drainage Strategy Plan included at Appendix 6 of the Sustainable Drainage report (**Figure 4.9** of this ES) additionally shows an area proposed for development within the northern part of the Site where limited raising of Site levels is proposed from circa 52.4 – 53m to above 53m AOD. The Flood Risk Assessment report states at paragraphs 5.8-5.9 that finished floor levels of residential buildings should be set at a minimum of 600mm above the adjacent 1 in 100 year + 37% flood level and 300mm for employment buildings.

7.155 Whilst advance planting should be undertaken wherever possible, given the anticipated short duration of the construction period any advance planting will provide limited short-term benefit during this period.

7.156 It is proposed to retain landscape features on the Site wherever possible. Some internal hedgerows within the Site and sections of hedgerow/tree planting around the Site peripheries will need to be removed to facilitate the built development and new vehicle access points. Vegetation to be removed is shown within the separate Tree Survey report. Any other vegetation that is to be removed is only proposed for removal in the interests of good management and will be described in the Arboricultural Method Statement or ecologist method statements.

7.157 In landscape terms, the effects arising during the construction phase will not lead to any long-term harm as the construction phase is transitory in nature and over the short term. It will generally reflect the overall change to the landscape character of the Site and loss of landscape features as outlined in the subsequent Operational Effects section.

7.158 Whilst sensitivity varies for the National Character Area profiles 100 and 104 the magnitude of change is judged to be Negligible, and the assessed landscape construction effect is therefore **Negligible** and **not significant**.

7.159 For LCT2, judged sensitivity is Medium and magnitude of change is Low, resulting in a **Minor adverse effect**, which is **not significant**.

7.160 Sensitivity varies across the Grafton – Lower Bullingham Landscape Zone, whilst magnitude of change for this area will be Medium/High, within areas judged to be Medium – Low sensitivity the assessed effect will be **Moderate / Minor adverse**, which is **not significant** and within the High – Medium sensitivity areas (towards the south of the Site) assessed effects are **Moderate / Major adverse**, which is **significant**.

7.161 Overall and relative to the local landscape character and resources, and given the local containment of the Site, which is judged to be of Medium sensitivity, it is judged there will be a High magnitude of change and a **Moderate/Major adverse** landscape effect on the Site and immediate context during the peak of the construction phase. This effect is **significant**, but is usual for a development of this scale, it is also temporary.

7.162 The landscape vegetative features (woodland, trees, hedgerows and vegetation) within the Site are judged to be of Medium sensitivity, and a Medium magnitude of change is anticipated due to the removal of some hedgerow vegetation during the construction phase, resulting in a **Moderate adverse** effect, which is **not significant**.

7.163 The watercourses on the Site, comprising the Red and Norton Brooks, and a pond within the east of the Site are of Medium sensitivity. No changes are proposed to the watercourses and the pond will be retained during construction. The Magnitude of change and assessed effects are **Negligible** and **not significant.**

Operation

7.164 The masterplanning process has sought to minimise the impact of the Proposed Development upon the landscape and this includes the conservation of the Red Brook watercourse and its floodplain, a pond, many of the Site hedgerows, most of the trees and the creation of new landscape habitats, which can be managed both for biodiversity and recreational benefits. All are embedded within the Green Infrastructure Parameters Plan.

7.165 The predicted operational effects are considered with reference to the published landscape character assessments, designated landscapes, local landscape character and site-specific landscape features and components. These are discussed in turn in the following paragraphs.

7.166 For the wider landscape character profiles, comprising the National Character Areas (NCA) 100 'Herefordshire Lowlands' and 104 'South Herefordshire and Over Severn', whilst sensitivity across the NCA's varies, on completion (year 1) and at year 15 the magnitude of change is judged to be Negligible, and the assessed landscape effect on completion and at year 15 is therefore **Negligible** and **not significant**.

7.167 The Herefordshire County Landscape Character Type 'LCT2: Lowland Farmlands' is judged to be of Medium sensitivity and the Proposed Development will result in a Low magnitude of change on this LCT overall on completion (year 1) resulting in a **Minor adverse** effect at the outset. The magnitude of change and judged effect will reduce to **Negligible**, by year 15 as the green infrastructure proposals mature. The assessed effects are **not significant**.

7.168 The 'Grafton – Lower Bullingham Landscape Zone is identified in Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis: Hereford and the Market Towns (2010) as ranging in sensitivity from Medium-Low to High-Medium. On completion (year 1) the magnitude of change on this Zone is judged to be Medium resulting in **Minor – Moderate adverse** effects. The built development will fall predominantly within the land identified as being of 'Medium-Low' sensitivity, extending into an area of 'High-Medium' sensitivity. The GI Strategy, including the country park proposals will deliver some green infrastructure benefits across this area, including replanting of hedgerows and trees and creation of wetland habitats, that will partially offset the adverse effects of built development as the landscaping matures. This will reduce the magnitude of change to Medium/Low and assessed effects to M**inor-Moderate / Minor adverse** by Year 15. The assessed effects are **not significant**.

7.169 For the Site to accommodate development there will be an inevitable disruption and change in the Site's landscape. The Site will be permanently changed in character from open farmland with field boundary hedgerows and trees to a built development with new properties, employment units and associated green infrastructure. However, the Site is already influenced by the existing employment buildings at Rotherwas Industrial Estate to the east and influenced by transport routes comprising the B4399 and the railway line on embankment, with settlement along Green Crize, in Bullinghope and Hereford residential areas north of the rail line. The sensitivity of the Site is assessed as Medium overall. The Proposed Development will appear in this context and as an extension to the existing built form.

7.170 The assessed magnitude of change is High on completion (year 1). The landscape effect upon the local landscape character of the Site and its immediate context is judged to be **Moderate/Major adverse** and **significant** upon completion (year 1) By Year 15, new green infrastructure will assist to integrate the Proposed Development within the landscape and deliver landscape enhancements in accordance with the recommendations of the published green infrastructure and landscape character documents. This will reduce the magnitude of change to Medium / High and assessed effects will reduce to **Moderate adverse** and **not significant** by year 15 as the green infrastructure framework becomes established.

7.171 The effect upon the landscape features of the Site has been assessed. The vegetative features of the Site are of Medium sensitivity and removal of some vegetation will result in a Medium magnitude of change on completion (year 1). Effects on vegetation are assessed as **Moderate adverse** initially, with the loss of some of the peripheral and internal hedgerows to facilitate access and the built development, some trees along the proposed cycle / bus connection into the Rotherwas Industrial Estate and a stretch of the recently planted vegetation alongside the B4399 to accommodate the access roundabout. Vegetation for removal is identified within the separate Tree Assessment Report submitted with the planning application. Most trees and Site boundary hedgerows will be retained and supplemented with locally characteristic, native tree, riparian and hedgerow planting, including within the proposed country park. Where lengths of peripheral hedgerows and B4399 planting are removed to facilitate access and visibility splays on Green Crize, Watery Lane and the B4399 access, replacement native hedgerow and tree planting will be undertaken behind the visibility splays/access works. By year 15, as the proposed green infrastructure planting approaches maturity the effects on the vegetation of the Site as a whole are assessed as **Minor/Moderate beneficial**. The assessed effects are **not significant**.

7.172 The primary water features of the Site; the Red and Norton Brooks, and a pond, area assessed as being of Medium sensitivity. They will be retained within broad swathes of green infrastructure and enhanced through appropriate new riparian scrub and tree planting, and meadow creation. The SuDS drainage proposals for the Proposed Development will provide new waterbodies and swales that will be designed for landscape and wildlife benefit, enhancing the blue infrastructure of the Site

once established. The magnitude of change and effects on completion (year 1) will be **Negligible** but over the short-medium term and by year 15 will result in a Low magnitude of change and become **Minor/Moderate beneficial** as the green infrastructure establishes. The assessed effects are **not significant**.

Visual effects

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

7.173 The ZTV (**Figure 7.28**) of the Proposed Development identifies the surrounding land from within which views towards any part of the Proposed Development are likely to be possible. The ZTV is not however, an indicator of the effect of the Proposed Development on the view but simply, its likely visible extent in the surrounding landscape.

7.174 A computer modelled ZTV of the Proposed Development (as shown on the Scale Parameter Plan) has been prepared using LIDAR Composite First Return DSM (Digital Surface Model) 2022 – 2m data published by the Environment Agency. The DSM data includes heights of existing objects such as buildings and vegetation as well as the terrain surface, for instance the railway embankment along the northern Site boundary. The buildings and vegetation restrict the extents of the ZTV helping to provide a greater understanding of where the Proposed Development would theoretically visible.

7.175 The ZTV for the Proposed Development is notably restricted within the immediate context by the railway embankment north of the Site and by the landform of Dinedor Hill to the south. The surrounding undulating landform to the west, settlement areas to the north and the Rotherwas Industrial estate to the east further limit potential visibility. The ZTV includes distant hills to the northwest, northeast and south-west, including parts of the Wye Valley National Landscape (AONB) to the east.

7.176 There could be some limited locations (beyond the extent of the ZTV shown) that could have a potential distant or very limited view to a part of the Proposed Development. Equally, there could be some locations shown within the ZTV that would not experience any views to the Proposed Development.

Construction

7.177 All construction works will be carried out in accordance with best practice procedures to minimise, as far as practicable, adverse effects on visual amenity.

7.178 Construction activities and plant movements within the Site will be visible from a limited number of receptors within the Site and immediate surrounding context. The clearest views towards the

activities and plant movements etc., within the Site will be experienced by local receptors comprising users of Lower Bullingham Lane through the Site (receptor B), residents adjacent to the Site (receptors C and G), users of PRoW through and just south of the Site (receptors E and F) and users of the footpaths and residents on Dinedor Hill (receptor Q). For these receptors the sensitivity is judged to be Medium (and Medium/High for receptors E and Q) and the magnitude of change is Medium (and Medium/High for receptors B and C). The assessed construction effects are **Moderate adverse** and **not significant**, except on receptors B and C which are assessed as **Moderate/Major adverse**. Whilst the assessed visual effects for receptors B and C are **significant**, they are also temporary.

7.179 For residents of Lower Bullingham (receptor A1), the view is largely obscured by the railway embankment and any views are likely to be limited and seen in the context of the settlement/railway embankment in the foreground. Sensitivity of this receptor is Medium, depending on the extent of available view from each property, the magnitude of change will range from None – Low/Medium and potential effects from **None to Minor/Moderate adverse** and **not significant**.

7.180 For users of peripheral roads; Green Crize (receptor D1), Watery Lane (receptor H) and the B4399 (receptor K), sensitivity is judged as Medium, Low and Low/Medium respectively in response to the existing focus of the view for each of the road users. The views are generally obscured by roadside hedgerows and vegetation, however there will be views of construction activities at specific points along the roads, particularly in the locations where vehicle access is proposed. A series of access proposal drawings have been produced and are appended to the transport chapter. A separate Tree Survey report identifies the vegetation to be removed to facilitate the access proposals and their visibility splays.

7.181 Along Green Crize (receptor D1), identified as Medium sensitivity, a circa 120 metre long stretch of hedgerow will be removed to facilitate construction of a pedestrian/cycle path link from Lower Bullingham and for a bus access and associated visibility splays. In this location the assessed magnitude of change on this receptor is High and construction effects are **Moderate/Major adverse** and **significant** with hedgerow removal opening up views across the Site. This can be mitigated to an extent through the use of hoardings and early replanting of the replacement roadside hedgerow behind the new footpath and visibility splays.

7.182 Along Watery Lane (receptor H), identified as Low sensitivity, the proposed farm / resident's access within the north and the bus / cycle access in the south, will result in the removal of a circa 80m and 109m lengths of hedgerow respectively, along with trees along the current track connection into the Rotherwas Industrial Estate. This will result in a Medium magnitude of change given the nature of the existing views along the lane. The visual effects of the construction works on users of Watery Lane are assessed as **Minor/Moderate adverse** and **not significant** overall.

7.183 Along the B4399 (receptor K), identified as Low/Medium sensitivity, construction works will be evident at the main roundabout access to the Proposed Development where a circa 78m length of hedgerow and roadside planting will be removed to facilitate the access. This will allow views into this part of the site from the receptor and the magnitude of change will be Medium. The assessed construction effects are **Minor/Moderate** adverse and **not significant**.

7.184 At increasing distance and with intervening vegetation any views of construction activities within the Site will be greatly restricted or prevented by intervening landform, buildings and tree cover, resulting in a Low – Negligible magnitude of change, and assessed effects for remaining identified receptors, including properties along Green Crize (receptor D – Medium sensitivity), users of Rotherwas Industrial Estate (receptor I – Low sensitivity), residents of Bullingham Lane (receptor J – Medium sensitivity), users of the two PRoW west of Green Crize (receptors L and O – Medium/High sensitivity), Bullinghope residents (receptor M – Medium sensitivity) and Dinedor Camp Scheduled Monument (receptor P – Medium/High sensitivity) assessed construction effects range from **Minor/Moderate adverse to Negligible** and **not significant**.

7.185 In very long-distance views, from elevated land to the southwest (receptor R – Medium/High sensitivity), an elevated viewpoint at Wye Valley National Landscape (AONB) (receptor S – High sensitivity), from Lugwardine (receptor T – Medium sensitivity) and from elevated land north of Hereford (receptor U – Medium sensitivity) at between 4 – 6km from the Site the construction activities will not be noticeable and barely discernible, resulting in Negligible magnitude of change. The assessed effects are **Negligible** and **not significant**.

Operation

7.186 The effects of the Proposed Development upon visual receptors are set out in full in the Visual Effects Table (**Appendix 7.4**). The following summarises the visual effects of the Proposed Development with embedded mitigation upon full completion (Year 1) prior to the growth of the green infrastructure planting and at Year 15 once the green infrastructure is approaching maturity. Receptor references are included in brackets, reference should be made to the Visual Effects Table, the location of the Visual Receptors as shown on **Figures 7.5 and 7.6** and the Photographs at **Figures 7.7-7.27.**

Residential properties and settlement

7.187 Residents at home with primary views from ground floor/garden and upper floors are considered to have a high visual susceptibility to change and residents with secondary views (primarily from first floor level) are considered to be of medium susceptibility. The value of the view and overall sensitivity will vary depending on the nature of the existing view from each receptor.

7.188 There are a limited number of residential properties with direct views to the Proposed Development. Around the Site periphery these are confined to residents of The Firs (receptor C) and to residents of properties on Watery Lane (receptor G). Both receptors are assessed as being of Medium sensitivity. For these residents, views are likely to be partially obscured by garden vegetation and/or other buildings. A proportion of the development will be visible in any views out across the Site. The assessed magnitude of change at Year 1 for this small number of properties is Medium resulting in Moderate adverse effects, this reduces to a Low / Medium – Low magnitude of change and **Minor/Moderate – Minor adverse** effects by Year 15 as intervening green infrastructure planting approaches maturity. The assessed effects are **not significant**.

7.189 Away from the immediate periphery there is the potential for restricted views to parts of the development for some residents of Green Crize (receptor D), for limited views from upstairs or attic windows for some properties in Lower Bullingham (receptor A1), from where views are generally prevented by the intervening railway embankment. Both receptors are assessed as being of Medium sensitivity. For both receptors the assessed magnitude of change at Year 1 range from None to Low/Medium and assessed effects from **None to Minor/Moderate adverse** reflecting the range of potential available views. Green infrastructure planting will have some limited benefits reducing the magnitude of change further by Year 15 to None – Low and assessed effects from **None-Minor adverse** for receptor A1 and from **Negligible – Minor beneficial** for receptor D where properties will have views across the country park landscaping. The assessed effects are **not significant**.

7.190 More distantly there is the potential for glimpse views to the built development, filtered by properties and trees along the intervening and relatively elevated Green Crize, from upstairs rear windows of properties on Bullingham Lane (receptor J) and from properties with east facing windows on the eastern edge of Bullinghope (receptor M) to the west. Both receptors are assessed as being of Medium sensitivity. The assessed magnitude of change at Year 1 at most will be Low and effects **Minor / Moderate adverse**. By year 15 these will reduce to Low / Negligible and Low respectively, resulting in **Minor adverse** effects for receptor J and **Minor beneficial** effects for receptor M where there are views from Bullinghope across the country park by year 15. The assessed effects are **not significant.**

7.191 At much greater distances, views are likely from elevated properties on the north facing slopes of Dinedor Hill (receptor Q – Medium/High sensitivity) and from elevated residential areas of Hereford (receptor A2 – Medium sensitivity). On completion (at year 1) assessed magnitude of change is Medium and Negligible – Low respectively for each receptor, resulting in **Moderate adverse** and **Negligible – Minor adverse** effects respectively. As green infrastructure planting matures by year 15 this will integrate the Proposed Development within the landscape further and will reduce the effects for receptor Q to **Minor/Moderate adverse**, effects for receptor A2 will remain **Negligible – Minor adverse**. The assessed effects are **not significant**.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and recreational facilities

7.192 PRoW where attention is primarily focused on the landscape and on particular views are considered to have a high susceptibility to change. The value of the view and overall sensitivity will vary depending on the nature of the existing view from each receptor.

7.193 One PRoW passes directly through the eastern part of the Site proposed for built development. This is Lower Bullingham Footpath 1 (receptor F). Part of the route will be diverted through greenspace around the western edge of the built development area. The remainder of the route will pass through retained green infrastructure close to the Red Brook, which will be enhanced through meadow grassland creation and landscape management. Views to the west of the route will remain unchanged. The foreground views east across fields to the industrial areas will be replaced by residential development along approximately half of the route through the site. The sensitivity of the receptor is Medium, reflective of the existing view. On completion (at year 1) the magnitude of change will be Medium and assessed effects are **Moderate adverse**. With maturing of green infrastructure planting along the route this will reduce to a Medium/Low magnitude by year 15 and **Moderate / Minor adverse** effects. The assessed effects are **not significant**.

7.194 Lower Bullingham Footpath 2 (receptor E) south of the Site, crosses land that is elevated above the Site. This receptor is assessed as Medium/High sensitivity. The Proposed Development will bring the settlement edge close to the receptor, retaining the Proposed Development on the lower ground against the backdrop of Hereford and Rotherwas Industrial Estate. The assessed magnitude of change on completion (year 1) is Medium and assessed effects **Moderate adverse**. Green infrastructure planting will comprise boundary hedgerow planting with trees which will soften the Proposed Development edge as it matures. By year 15 the magnitude of change will reduce to Medium/Low and assessed effects will reduce to **Moderate / Minor adverse**. The assessed effects are **not significant**.

7.195 A further PRoW follows the northern boundary of land proposed for the country park; Grafton Footpath 1 (receptor L). and a second PRoW lies to the west of this: Grafton Footpath 2 (receptor O). From both receptors there is the potential for restricted views towards the built development to the east, where rooftops may be visible heavily screened/filtered by the subtle ridge of land along Green Crize and the buildings/trees along this road. The receptors are assessed as Medium / High sensitivity. Prior to the establishment of the country park landscaping, the assessed magnitude of change and effects at Year 1 are assessed as **Negligible**, once established the landscaping will further screen views beyond Green Crize and deliver local landscape benefits and the effects will become **Minor beneficial** for both receptors. The assessed effects are **not significant**.

7.196 More distantly there are a small number of PRoW crossing the north facing slopes of Dinedor Hill (receptor Q), from these PRoW there are a range of elevated, panoramic views across the Site on lower ground with Hereford and Rotherwas Industrial Estate bordering the Site to the north and east

respectively. The receptor is assessed as Medium / High sensitivity. Development will infill areas of the low-lying fields retaining substantial swathes of green infrastructure, particularly associated with the Red Brook. This will bring the settlement edge closer to the receptor. The change will be noticeable but not incongruous. Assessed magnitude of change at Year 1 is Medium and assessed effects are **Moderate adverse**. As green infrastructure planting matures this will integrate the Proposed Development further within the landscape and will reduce the magnitude of change to Low and assessed effects to **Minor/Moderate adverse** by year 15. The assessed effects are **not significant.**

7.197 The view from two further recreational receptors has been assessed. These are from the front of St Peter's Church (receptor N) and from Dinedor Camp Scheduled Monument (receptor P). The receptors are assessed as Medium / High sensitivity. From the church grounds in front of the church intervening buildings and tree cover prevent views from the church ground east towards land proposed for the country park and towards the Proposed Development east of Green Crize. The southern edge of the country park will be visible only. New footpaths, meadow grassland and locally characteristic hedgerow and tree planting are proposed. The proposals for the country park will deliver local visual benefits as they mature. For receptor N, the assessed magnitude of change and effects are **Negligible** at year 1 and will change to a Low magnitude and **Minor beneficial** by year 15. The assessed effects are **not significant**.

7.198 The monument (receptor P) is generally enclosed by woodland. In previous assessment work, no summer views out were identified; however, during the December 2023 site visit it was noted that some vegetation clearance may have occurred as a view out from the embankment footpath along the north-eastern edge of the monument is now possible. The rest of the monument remains contained within trees. The fields of the site can be seen in front of the built-up areas. Development would infill parts of the low-lying fields retaining substantial swathes of open fields within the proposed green infrastructure, particularly associated with the Red Brook. This would bring the settlement edge closer to the receptor. The change would be noticeable but not incongruous. On completion (year 1) the assessed magnitude of change is Low / Medium and assessed effects are **Moderate adverse**. Green Infrastructure planting would soften views of the built development and existing settlement beyond as it matures. By year 15 the assessed magnitude of change will reduce to Low and effects to **Minor adverse**. The assessed effects are **not significant**.

Roads

7.199 Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes are generally considered to have a medium susceptibility to change and a low susceptibility where views are primarily focused on the transport route. The value of the view and overall sensitivity will vary depending on the nature of the existing view from each receptor.

7.200 Lower Bullingham Lane (receptor B) passes directly through the eastern Site area. There are existing views from the lane north to Lower Bullingham and Hereford settlement areas, beyond the railway embankment and south to Dinedor Hill. The sensitivity of this receptor is assessed as Medium. The lane is to be retained through the built development area as part of the key footpath cycleway link. The roadside hedgerow will be retained wherever possible and Proposed Development will be positioned behind the hedgerow. Proposed development will be present to the west and east along a short section of the lane. The northern and southern extents of the lane will pass through green space and fields south of the Site respectively. There will be open views of built development to both sides of the road softened by the retained hedgerow to one side. Assessed magnitude of change at Year 1 is Medium / High and the overall effect will be **Moderate/Major adverse** and therefore **significant**. The embedded mitigation will reduce the visual effects for users of the road as it matures and where the route passes through the green infrastructure of the Site it will be enhanced, the assessed magnitude of change will reduce to Medium and effects to **Moderate adverse** by Year 15 and **not significant**.

7.201 For users of peripheral roads; Green Crize (receptor D1 – Medium sensitivity), Watery Lane (receptor H – Low sensitivity) and the B4399 (receptor K – Low / Medium sensitivity) the view is generally obscured by roadside hedgerows and vegetation, however there will be views of built development along specific sections of the roads in the locations where vegetation removal is proposed to provide vehicle and other forms of access for the Proposed Development. In these locations sections of hedgerow will need to be removed to facilitate the access proposals, which include a length of foot/cycle path alongside Green Crize, bus/cycle access across Watery Lane to the Rotherwas Industrial Estate and a farm / resident's access further north on Watery Lane, and to incorporate visibility splays where required. To facilitate the bus/cycle connection to Rotherwas Industrial Estate some trees will also be removed alongside a connecting section of existing track from Watery Lane. Alongside the B4399 a length of hedgerow and recent tree planting associated with the creation of this road will be removed to construct the new roundabout access.

7.202 The assessed magnitude of change on completion (year 1) for users of Watery Lane and the B4399 is Medium and Medium / Low respectively and effects are **Minor/Moderate adverse** reducing to a Low magnitude and **Minor adverse** by Year 15 for both receptors as the proposed replacement and gateway green infrastructure planting matures. The assessed effects are **not significant**.

7.203 The assessed magnitude of change and effects for users of Green Crize are greater, on completion (year 1) the magnitude of change is judged to be **High with Moderate/Major adverse** and significant effects as the proposals will notably alter the nature of views for users of a circa 120 metre stretch of the lane just south of Lower Bullingham. The removal of the hedgerow will temporarily create an open view across the western section of the Proposed Development. Replacement hedgerow and tree planting is proposed behind the new foot/cycle path and visibility splays, and as this matures, it will screen views to the Proposed Development. The bus access and

foot/cycle path will remain visible to users of the lane. By year 15, the assessed magnitude of change will reduce to Medium, and effects will reduce to **Moderate adverse** and **not significant** for road users.

People at work

7.204 People at their place of work where views of the landscape are not important to the quality of the working life are considered to have a low visual susceptibility to change. The value of the view and overall sensitivity will vary depending on the nature of the existing view from each receptor.

7.205 The potential for views from Rotherwas Industrial Estate (receptor I) has been assessed. The sensitivity of the receptor is Low. The buildings on the estate comprise predominantly industrial sheds without windows, any glimpse views out towards the Site are likely to be from associated car parks and yards. Any views of the Proposed Development and / or highways proposals alongside Watery Lane and /or the proposed bus connection route into the estate will be in the context of existing industry. Whilst a section of hedgerow along Watery Lane and some of the trees along the access track between Watery Lane and the estate will be removed to facilitate the bus / cycle connection, green infrastructure planting comprising tree planting and a replacement hedgerow alongside Watery lane will as it matures screen and soften any views of the built development and create an enhanced landscape to the foreground of the view. This will partially offset any adverse effects from the built development. The assessed magnitude of change on completion (year 1) is Low and effects are **Minor adverse** at most. Magnitude of change and assessed effects will reduce to **Negligible** by Year 15 with the maturing of the intervening green infrastructure planting. The assessed effects are **not significant**.

Very long-distance views

7.206 In very long-distance views, from elevated land to the southwest (receptor R – Medium / High sensitivity), an elevated viewpoint at Wye Valley National Landscape (AONB) (receptor S – High sensitivity), from Lugwardine (receptor T – Medium sensitivity) and from elevated land north of Hereford (receptor U – Medium sensitivity) at between 4 – 6km from the Site the Proposed Development will not be noticeable and barely discernible. The assessed magnitude of change and effects are **Negligible** at Years 1 and 15. The assessed effects are **not significant**.

Mitigation Measures and Residual Effects

7.207 This Section considers mitigation measures which are not 'embedded' within the Proposed Development, but which would be delivered as part of future detailed proposals to reduce (where possible) the impacts identified in the Potential Effects Section.

Mitigation Measures

Construction Phase

7.208 The location and design of temporary site compounds, lighting, signage and perimeter screen fencing, combined with effective project management would seek to ensure that the potential landscape and visual effects are mitigated and minimised during the construction phase and will be subject to condition.

7.209 It is anticipated that the construction working methods will seek to adopt best practices and a detailed CEMP will be agreed with the Local Planning Authorities and Statutory Bodies where necessary. Landscape and visual impacts addressed by the detailed CEMP will include:

- soil movement and management;
- protection of valuable landscape features, such as the hedgerows, woodland, mature trees, watercourses and ponds;
- programming and site access will assist in the protection of valuable landscape features;
- early peripheral green infrastructure planting and implementation of measures to protect this new planting;
- the nature and placement of hoardings and signboards;
- feasibility of erecting temporary screen fences; and
- working hours and minimisation of light spill.

7.210 Protective fencing and measures in accordance with BS 5837 (Trees in Relation to Construction) would be implemented as required to protect the retained landscape features within the Site. The removal of any mature trees or vegetation would be undertaken outside the bird nesting season (or would otherwise if unavoidable, be inspected prior to removal by a suitably qualified ecologist and only removed following confirmation that there are no nesting birds present).

7.211 Early in the construction period for each phase, earthworks operations would also occur for a short period of time to construct the attenuation. The details of the proposed works are not known at this stage. However, it is anticipated that they would comprise excavation of the existing ground levels to an appropriate depth to construct swales and storage areas. Any visible depressions would then be planted with native marginal species or sown with a wet grass seed mix as appropriate.

7.212 Proposed landscape planting should be undertaken in advance of each phase or as early as possible during the construction of each phase to enable temporary landscape and visual effects from construction and after to completion to be mitigated as quickly as possible.

7.213 The use, location, extent and design of any temporary fencing will be determined at the detailed design stage and in consultation with the relevant authorities and surrounding properties. Particular

attention will be paid to the potential visual effects upon those receptors within the Site and at the Site peripheries with the clearest views towards the construction activity.

Operational phase

Landscape treatment

7.214 The overarching landscape mitigation/GI Strategy is described earlier within this chapter as part of the embedded mitigation.

7.215 The GI Strategy sets out the recommended design objectives to ensure that a high quality and appropriate landscape can be provided as a part of the Proposed Development and provides a mechanism for this to be taken forward to the reserved matters design stage.

7.216 Detailed planting plans will be devised in accordance with the principles established at reserved matters stage for each phase of the Proposed Development. Planting within the green infrastructure/public open space areas will use predominantly native, locally occurring species and will be designed to help screen and assimilate the built elements with their surroundings. Management plans will be prepared to ensure that the green infrastructure, including habitats, SuDS and country park are managed for successful establishment and continuity.

7.217 On-plot landscaping, detailed at reserved matters stage can also contribute to the character of the landscape, a high-quality landscape which incorporates street and garden tree planting will further minimise the assessed landscape and visual effects.

Building Design

7.218 The Potential Effects Section has assessed landscape and visual effects based on the maximum building heights, as shown on the Scale Parameter Plan. Whilst these maximum parameters have been set, building heights are more likely to reflect those described within the DAS. Where possible, the detailed design will seek to reduce heights from the maximum stated values.

7.219 The design of walls and roofs can help to better assimilate buildings with their surroundings. The colour and choice of material will be carefully selected to minimise visual effects prior to the establishment of screen planting. The design principles established within the DAS set this as a benchmark for the reserved matters application.

7.220 Similarly, to integrate the Proposed Development into the surrounding environment it is intended that the colour range chosen for the building facades will help to reduce the visual impact of the Proposed Development.

Lighting

7.221 A Lighting Impact Assessment has been prepared by MEC to support the outline planning application. The report "includes a lighting strategy that includes information on the surrounding sensitive receptors and mitigation measures considered within the design to comply with Herefordshire Council (HC) street lighting guidance, to reduce potential light spill into ecologically sensitive areas, to reduce upward light and fit in with the landscape proposals of the development" (paragraph 1.5).

7.222 The lighting products and specifications to be selected will be founded on the key principles of energy efficiency and minimising environmental effects. A lighting strategy will be devised which will:

- minimise effects on light sensitive ecological and residential receptors that are identified within the report;
- minimise spill light and glare to surrounding areas;
- minimise upward sky pollution; and
- a curfew will be operated and the duration of any lighting minimised.

7.223 The lighting strategy will incorporate the very latest, energy efficient directional luminaires that prevent sky glow, glare and light spillage. The detailed lighting scheme will be designed to minimise upward light pollution and to comply with the relevant British Standards, the Highways Design Guide for new Developments[9] and the Institute of Lighting Engineers (ILE) best practice.

7.224 The following factors largely influence the extent of the night-time visual effects arising from the lighting proposals:

- the existing extent, sources and levels of lighting in and around the Site;
- the location of receptors and areas of settlement with views towards the Proposed Development; and
- the adoption of best lighting design practice.

7.225 The Lighting Impact Assessment concludes that *"With the proposed development in place, lighting from the site will not exceed the recommended ILP pre- and post-curfew criteria"* (paragraph 9.2) and *"Lux levels along the light-sensitive ecological areas in and around the development will be below 1 lux therefore lighting is not anticipated to have a significant impact on any light-sensitive species using this space"* (paragraph 9.3).

7.226 Overall, the night-time visual effects of the Proposed Development should be minimised through the adoption of the lighting strategy and further attention at the detailed design stage to the lighting proposals.

Residual effects

7.227 In the context of the landscape and visual assessment, many (primary) mitigation measures are embedded in the design parameters for the Proposed Development. These include attention to the siting, layout and heights of the Proposed Development and consideration of the green infrastructure, including the country park proposals. All of these measures are therefore integral to the Proposed Development and have been assessed as part of the construction and operation of the scheme.

7.228 This Section considers the effects with the secondary mitigation measures, incorporated to address any remaining adverse effects. The residual operational effects assessment considers the Proposed Development 15 years after full completion and commencement of operations.

Construction phase

Landscape

7.229 The residual landscape effects during construction will remain broadly as stated for construction in the earlier Potential Effects Section. For the landscape of the Site and its immediate context and for parts of the 'Grafton-Lower Bullingham Landscape Zone' (as defined within the Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis: Hereford and the Market Towns) the residual construction effect will be **Moderate/Major adverse** and is **significant** under the EIA Regulations; however, this is a temporary effect.

Visual

7.230 Overall, there will be no change to the significance of the visual effects for construction as set out in the Potential Effects Section. Significant but temporary **Moderate / Major adverse** visual effects under the EIA Regulations will occur for receptors within the Site: Lower Bullingham Lane users (receptor B), for residents of The Firs (receptor C) and road users along the stretch of Green Crize (receptor D1) where new foot/cycle path and bus access are proposed adjacent to the Site boundary. The CEMP will need to carefully consider these receptors in particular in order to minimise effects.

Operational phase

Landscape

7.231 An assessment of the residual landscape effects of the Proposed Development (at Year 15) on the identified receptors is included in the Landscape Effects Table at **Appendix 7.3**, and above. None of the residual effects are assessed as significant under the EIA Regulations.

7.232 Any of the adverse effects at Year 15 stated in the Potential Effects Section may be reduced through specifics such as reduction in building heights, detailed building design and planting within the built development area, such as street and garden planting will help to further visually soften the built form.

Visual

7.233 An assessment of the residual visual effects of the proposals (at Year 15) on the identified receptors is included in the Visual Effects Table at **Appendix 7.4.** None of the residual effects are assessed as significant under the EIA Regulations.

7.234 The successful management and subsequent maturing of the landscape and planting proposals, including replacement planting, will offer the greatest localised visual benefits to those receptors within the Site and generally closest to the perimeters of the Proposed Development namely the PRoW and Lower Bullingham Lane through the Site, peripheral roads and properties, and more distant receptors with open views such as those on Dinedor Hill. At these locations, the maturing of the planting will assist in further screening and filtering any available views towards the Proposed Development and in visually integrating it with the existing surrounding landform and landscape setting. The establishment and maturing of street trees and garden planting will further integrate the Proposed Development and minimise assessed effects.

Cumulative Effects

7.235 A list of cumulative sites has been agreed with LPA as described within **Chapter 2: Approach to EIA**. The Cumulative Sites Plan at **Figure 2.1** shows the locations of the identified sites. The following considers the cumulative landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development in combination with development of the identified sites.

Landscape Effects

7.236 The Site lies across the boundary of the Natural England NCA 100: Herefordshire Lowlands and NCA 104: South Herefordshire and Over Severn with most of the Site within NCA104. The identified cumulative sites fall entirely within NCA 100 except for site 15 (the previously submitted planning application for the Site) which primarily falls within NCA 104. Both NCAs range from Low-High sensitivity. The Site would contribute minimally to a Negligible magnitude of change within NCA100 and NCA 104 overall resulting from development of the committed sites. Assessed effects on the NCAs remain **Negligible** at year 1 and 15, which is **not significant**.

7.237 The Herefordshire County LCT2: Lowland Farmlands surrounds Hereford and covers an extensive area. It is assessed as Medium sensitivity. Most of the cumulative sites fall within this area except for sites 4-12 and 16-18 which fall within the Hereford Urban Area. Collectively sites 1-3 and 13-15 in combination with the Proposed Development would increase the influence of Hereford on this LCT resulting in a Low magnitude of change. Assessed effects remain as **Minor adverse** at year 1 reducing to **Negligible** by year 15, which is **not significant**.

7.238 The Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis: Hereford and the Market Towns locates the Site within the Grafton – Lower Bullingham Landscape Zone. Cumulative sites 1-3 and 15-16 also fall within this zone. Cumulatively they would result in a Medium / High magnitude of change to this zone at year 1. The sensitivity across the zone ranges from Medium-Low across the northern part of the Site to High-Medium across the remaining areas including those in which the cumulative sites are located. Assessed cumulative effects increase to **Moderate / Major adverse** at year 1, these would initially be **significant**, but would reduce to **Moderate adverse** and **not significant** by year 15 with the maturing of associated green infrastructure planting.

7.239 The Site and immediate context are defined by the ZTV indicated on **Figure 7.5** and are assessed as Medium sensitivity overall. Only the cumulative sites 4-8, 16 and 18 at Rotherwas Industrial estate fall within this context, along with site 15, which comprises the previously submitted application for the Site. Development of sites 4-8, 16 and 18 in combination with site 15-would increase the extent and presence of built development within the immediate context of the Site; however, given the nature of the existing Site context and the Proposed Development, this would not be to the extent that it would result in an increase in the judged magnitude of change and the assessed effects on the Site and immediate context resulting from the Proposed Development alone. Assessed effects would remain **Moderate / Major adverse** at year 1, which is **significant**, reducing to **Moderate adverse** by year 15 with the maturing of green infrastructure planting, which is **not significant**.

Visual Effects

7.240 The ZTV of the Proposed Development is shown at **Figure 7.28.** Site 15 (the previously submitted planning application for the Site) falls within the local ZTV of the Site. Should this cumulative site be developed assessed visual effects would increase slightly in line with those set out in the LVIA for the previously submitted planning application. The change to assessed effects is minimal, with the magnitude of change to views from the two public footpaths that pass through the site 15 - Lower Bullingham Footpath 2 (receptor E) and Lower Bullingham Footpath 1 (receptor F) increasing to Medium / High resulting in **Moderate / Major adverse** effects at year 1 that are **significant**. Assessed magnitude of change would reduce to medium and effects to **Moderate adverse** and **not significant** by year 15 with the maturing of proposed green infrastructure planting.

7.241 Within the wider context the remaining cumulative sites fall outside of the ZTV of the Proposed Development or would not be viewed collectively in views to the Proposed Development from the identified receptors and there would therefore be no cumulative effects.

7.242 Two views have been identified where the Proposed Development may be viewed collectively with the permitted employment sites 4-9 and 16-18 within the Rotherwas Industrial Estate (and with the previously submitted site 15). In views from the footpaths and properties on Dinedor Hill (receptor Q) and from the north-eastern edge of the Dinedor Camp scheduled monument (receptor P) the Proposed Development may be seen in conjunction with these developments. The proposals for sites 4-9 and 16-18 are of a scale in keeping with existing employment units and sited within the Rotherwas Industrial Estate, as such the magnitude of change on this receptor in combination with the Proposed Development will not increase notably and will remain as Low/Medium and Medium respectively. Assessed effects will therefore remain unchanged from the assessment given for the Proposed Development alone – **Moderate adverse** at year 1 and **Minor – Minor/Moderate adverse** at year 15, which are **not significant**.

7.243 In long distance views from elevated land to the north-east - Wye Valley National Landscape (AONB) (receptor S) - and from Lugwardine (receptor T) the Proposed Development is barely discernible, beyond the Rotherwas Industrial Estate and would be viewed in the context of the permitted sites 4-9 and 16-18 within the estate and the previously submitted site 15; however at this distance (4.5-5.15km) the magnitude of change to the view at years 1 and 15 would remain Negligible and assessed effects would remain **Negligible**, which is **not significant**.

Conclusions

7.244 The Proposed Development has been designed with embedded landscape mitigation, incorporating an extensive and comprehensive GI Strategy which includes a new country park proposal. These

proposals have been designed to take on board the recommendations of the relevant published landscape character and green infrastructure guidance.

7.245 No specific designations relating to landscape quality or value have been identified within the Site. Within the wider landscape context, the most sensitive heritage designations comprise the listed St Peter's Church and the Dinedor Camp Scheduled Monument. The view from these heritage assets has been assessed and the residual visual effects of the Proposed Development at year 15 **are Minor beneficial and adverse** respectively and **not significant**. The Wye Valley National Landscape (AONB) lies some distance to the east with an elevated viewpoint identified approximately 5.3km from the Site, again views from here have been assessed for completeness, given the substantial distance of the viewpoint, the visual effects at most are **Negligible**.

7.246 Most of the Site and its immediate context falls within NCA 104: South Herefordshire and Over Severn. The eastern edge of the Site, the Rotherwas Industrial Estate and Hereford fall within the adjacent NCA 100: Herefordshire Lowlands. At a County Level the Site and immediate context fall within 'LCT 2: Lowland Farmlands'. Given the scale of these areas, development of the Site would initially result in a **Negligible** or **Minor adverse** landscape effect, reducing to a **Negligible** residual landscape effect as the embedded green infrastructure matures, which is **not significant**.

7.247 The Site falls within the Grafton-Lower Bullingham Landscape Zone as defined by the Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis: Hereford and the Market Towns (2010). The Proposed Development covers a minimal/moderate geographical extent of this zone and whilst forming a not incongruous extension to Hereford and the Rotherwas Industrial Estate will substantially change the landscape from open fields to built development with Green Infrastructure. Whilst there will be some landscape benefits from the introduction of the country park, the assessed residual effects are **Minor – Moderate /Minor adverse** and **not significant**.

7.248 Effects on landscape features of the Site have been assessed. Whilst a number of peripheral and internal hedgerows and trees will be removed, including along the track proposed for the cycle / bus route into Rotherwas Industrial Estate, the majority of vegetation, watercourses and waterbodies will be retained within the green infrastructure for the Proposed Development and supplemented with further locally characteristic hedgerow and tree planting and new waterbodies which will incorporate biodiversity enhancement measures. Subject to the detailed design, assessed residual effects could be as much as **Minor/Moderate beneficial** for the landscape features of the Site, which is **not significant**.

7.249 In visual terms the Site is within a relatively contained landscape between the railway line/Hereford settlement edge, the Rotherwas Industrial Estate, the B4399 and the higher ground of Dinedor Hill and Green Crize. The baseline ZTV for the Site and its context is shown on **Figure 7.5** and **Figure**

7.6 shows the ZTV across distant elevated land. A separate plan at **Figure 7.8** shows the ZTV for the Proposed Development and is based upon the Scale Parameter Plan.

7.250 For the majority of visual receptors, the assessed effects at Year 1 and 15 are **not significant**. Prior to the establishment of green infrastructure planting **Moderate/Major adverse** and therefore significant effects were identified for users of Lower Bullingham Lane (receptor B) through the Site and for a stretch of Green Crize (receptor D1) adjacent to the Site boundary. In these instances, the embedded mitigation will reduce the residual assessed effects to **Moderate adverse** and **not significant** as green infrastructure planting matures.

7.251 The assessed residual effects will be minimised through the provision of detailed planting plans compliant with the GI Strategy at reserved matters stage and through the preparation and implementation of an associated management plan.

7.252 Cumulative landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development in combination with the identified cumulative sites 1-16 have been assessed. There would be some limited cumulative effects in landscape and visual terms in combination with sites 4-9 and 16-18 within the Rotherwas Industrial Estate, the previously submitted proposals (site 15) and with sites 1-3 around Grafton. The assessed residual effects are **not significant**.

7.253 In conclusion, the overall assessment of landscape and visual effects shows that the Site can successfully incorporate the Proposed Development adjacent to the Hereford settlement edge without significant residual effects under the EIA Regulations on the identified immediate and wider area landscape and visual receptors.

Table 7.2: Summary of Effects

Effect/ Receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude	Nature/Level of Effect	Mitigation	Residual Effect (significance)
Construction Phase					
National Landscape Character Areas	Varies Low - High	Negligible	Short-term, temporary, direct	Retention of landscape structure and features wherever possible. Refer to Arboricultural Assessment for retained vegetation.	Negligible (not significant)
County Landscape Character Area	Low - High	Medium	Short-term, temporary, direct		Minor Adverse (not significant)
Grafton – Lower Bullingham Landscape Zone	Medium-Low – High-Medium	Medium / High	Short-term, temporary, direct		Mod/Minor (not significant) – Mod/Major Adverse (significant)
Site & Immediate Context	Medium	High	Short-term, temporary, direct		Moderate / Major Adverse (significant)
Site landscape features: Woodland, Trees, Hedgerows and Vegetation	Medium	Medium	Long-term, permanent, direct		Moderate Adverse (not significant)

Site Landscape Features Water Features and Watercourses	Medium	Negligible	Short term, permanent, direct		Negligible (not significant)
Visual Effects – receptors A1, A2, D, E - U	Low – Medium / High	Negligible – Medium	Short term, temporary, direct	Careful siting and design of Proposed Development as embedded within the Parameters Plans and set out within the Design & Access Statement. Green Infrastructure planting as set out on the GI Strategy Plan.	Negligible – Moderate Adverse (not significant)
Visual Effects – receptors B, C and D1	Medium	Medium/high - High	Short term, temporary, direct		Moderate / Major Adverse (significant)
Operational Phase (Year 1)					
National Landscape Character Areas	Varies Low - High	Negligible	Short – mid-term, temporary, direct	Comprehensive GI Strategy with provision embedded within the Green Infrastructure Parameters Plan and proposals as set out on the GI Strategy Plan **(Appendix 7.5**)	Negligible (not significant)
County Landscape Character Area	Medium	Low	Short - mid-term, temporary, direct		Minor Adverse (not significant)
Grafton – Lower Bullingham Landscape Zone	Varies Medium-Low – High-Medium	Medium	Short - mid-term, temporary, direct		Varies Minor – Moderate Adverse (not significant)
Site & Immediate Context	Medium	High	Short - mid-term, temporary, direct		Moderate / Major Adverse (significant)
Site landscape features: Woodland, Trees, Hedgerows and Vegetation	Medium	Medium	Short-term, permanent, direct		Moderate Adverse (not significant)
Site Landscape Features Water Features and Watercourses	Medium	Negligible	Short-term, permanent, direct		Negligible (not significant)
Visual Effects – receptors A1, A2, C, D, E - U	Low – High	None – Medium	Short – mid-term, temporary, direct	Careful siting and design of Proposed Development as embedded within the Parameters Plans and set out within the Design & Access Statement. Green Infrastructure planting as set	None – Moderate Adverse (not significant)
Visual Effects – receptors B and D1	Medium	Medium / High - High	Short - Mid term, temporary, direct		Moderate / Major Adverse (significant)

				out on the GI Strategy Plan.	
Operational Phase (Year 15)					
National and County Landscape Character Areas	Varies Low - High	Negligible	Long-term, permanent, direct	Comprehensive GI Strategy with provision embedded within the Green Infrastructure Parameters Plan and proposals as set out on the GI Strategy Plan (**Appendix 7.5)**	Negligible (not significant)
Grafton – Lower Bullingham Landscape Zone	Varies Medium-Low – High-Medium	Medium / Low	Long-term, permanent, direct		Varies Minor – Moderate / Minor Adverse (not significant)
Site & Immediate Context	Medium	Medium / High	Long-term, permanent, direct		Moderate Adverse (not significant)
Site landscape features: Woodland, Trees, Hedgerows and Vegetation	Medium	Low / Medium	Long-term, permanent, direct		Moderate / Minor Beneficial (not significant)
Site Landscape Features Water Features and Watercourses	Medium	Low	Long-term, permanent, direct		Moderate / Minor Beneficial (not significant)
Visual Effects – receptors A1, A2, C, D, E - U	Low – High	None – Low / Medium	Short – mid-term, temporary, direct	Careful siting and design of Proposed Development as embedded within the Parameters Plans and set out within the Design & Access Statement. Green Infrastructure planting as set out on the GI Strategy Plan.	None – Moderate / Minor Adverse (not significant)
Visual Effects – receptors B and D1	Medium	Medium	Long term, permanent, direct		Moderate Adverse (not significant)
Cumulative Effects (Year 1)					
National Landscape Character Area NCA100	Varies Low - High	Negligible	Short - mid-term, temporary, direct	No additional mitigation is proposed.	No change Negligible (not significant)
County Landscape Character Area	Medium	Low	Short - mid-term, temporary, direct		No change Minor Adverse (not significant)
Grafton – Lower Bullingham Landscape Zone	Varies Medium-Low – High-Medium	Medium / High	Short - mid-term, temporary, direct		Increase Moderate / Major Adverse (significant)
Site & Immediate Context	Medium	High	Short - mid-term, temporary, direct		No change Moderate / Major Adverse (significant)
Visual Effects – receptors E and F	Medium – Medium / High	Medium / High	Short - mid-term, temporary, direct		Increase Moderate / Major Adverse (significant)
Visual Effects – receptors P and Q	Medium / High	Low / Medium and Medium	Short - mid-term,		No change Moderate Adverse

			temporary, direct		(not significant)
Visual Effects – receptors S and T	Medium – High	Negligible	Short - mid-term, temporary, direct		No change Negligible (not significant)
Cumulative Effects (Year 15)					
National Landscape Character Area NCA100	Varies Low - High	Negligible	Long-term, permanent, direct	No additional mitigation is proposed.	No change Negligible (not significant)
County Landscape Character Area	Medium	Negligible	Long-term, permanent, direct		No change Negligible (not significant)
Grafton – Lower Bullingham Landscape Zone	Varies Medium-Low – High-Medium	Medium	Long-term, permanent, direct		Increase Moderate Adverse (not significant)
Site & Immediate Context	Medium	Medium	Long-term, permanent, direct		No change Moderate Adverse (not significant)
Visual Effects – receptors E and F	Medium – Medium / High	Medium	Short - mid-term, temporary, direct		Increase Moderate Adverse (not significant)
Visual Effects – receptors P and Q	Medium / High	Low / Medium and Medium	Short - mid-term, temporary, direct		No change Minor – Minor / Moderate Adverse (not significant)
Visual Effects – receptors S and T	Medium – High	Negligible	Short - mid-term, temporary, direct		No change Negligible (not significant)

[1] National Planning Policy Framework, Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, December 2023
[2] Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011-2031, Herefordshire Council, Adopted Oct 2015.
[3] Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis: Hereford and the Market Towns, Herefordshire Council, January 2010.
[4] Herefordshire County Landscape Character Assessment, Herefordshire Council, Final Report April 2023.
[5] Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV): A map usually digitally produced, showing areas of land within which a development is theoretically visible. [GLVIA3]
[6] GLVIA3 Statement of Clarification 1/13, Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management, 10th June 2013.
[7] National Character Area Profile 104 South Herefordshire and Over Severn. Natural England, 2014.
[8] National Character Area Profile100 Herefordshire Lowlands, Natural England, 2013.
[9] Highways Design Guide for New Developments, Herefordshire Council, 2006.