

Landscape and Visual Technical Note

Land off the A363 White Horse Business Park, Trowbridge, Wiltshire

August 2023

Introduction

1. This Landscape and Visual Technical Note has been produced for Castlewood Property Ltd by a Chartered Landscape Architect at Turley Landscape and VIA. It accompanies the revisions to the outline planning application for the proposed development on Land off the A363 White Horse Development Park (Application reference: 20/03641/OUT). It has been prepared in response to consultation responses and landscape and visual issues identified through post submission conversations with Wiltshire Council.
2. This Technical Note should be read in conjunction with the Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (LVIA) prepared for the original submission and the subsequent Landscape and Visual Technical Note prepared in January 2022. It should also be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement Addendum which includes the revised Parameter Plans and Illustrative Layout and the Landscape Strategy by Turley Design; the information on ecology produced by Nicholas Pearson Associates (NPA); and, the plans and Planning Statement submitted in support of the original planning application.
3. The Technical Note provides a summary of the revised Scheme Proposal, it then identifies the key consultation comments related to landscape and visual matters which have been submitted since January 2022; and describes how the revisions to the Scheme Proposal have responded to these comments. It then considers the findings of the submitted LVIA and summaries any changes to the conclusions of this assessment.

Summary of the revised Scheme Proposal

4. The revised Scheme Proposal provides an illustrative layout that incorporates 70 residential dwellings. The Parameter Plan – Land Use (Drawing: CASR3002-5000 Rev: K) and the Green Infrastructure Parameters Plan (Drawing: NPA 11020 301) defines where within the Site residential development of up to 2.5 storeys would be located and which parts of the Site would be green infrastructure. Key changes that have been made to the Scheme Proposal are listed below:
 - The proposed 64 bed care home that formed part of the original outline planning application has been removed. This part of the Site would become green infrastructure used to contribute to the Site's biodiversity.
 - The number of residential dwellings have been reduced from up to 91 dwellings to up to 70 dwellings.
 - The developable area has been located to the northeast of the Site and contained within the existing hedgerow structure. A substantial area of green infrastructure of increased width has been provided along the western side of the Site in order to maintain the

separate identities of North Bradley and the expanded settlement area of Trowbridge to the west of the White Horse Business Park.

- The offset of the developable area from the central hedgerow has increased to ensure this is maintained within public open space as opposed to residential gardens. The illustrative layout and the Street Hierarchy plan contained in the DAS demonstrates how built form is intended to be offset from the hedgerow with development fronting onto the green corridor as a 'park edge' route.
- The set back of the developable area from the rear of existing residential properties to the east of Woodmarsh has been significantly increased with a minimum distance of c.160m.
- Dark corridors for bat mitigation have been increased in width from 15m to provide a minimum 30m wide buffer to development (rear gardens are not included in the buffer).
- The proposals have been further developed and the scheme has been assessed using Natural England's Metric to ensure that in accordance with the Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy it can deliver 100% mitigation for all greenfield habitat loss within the Site and an 18.63% increase in Habitat Units.
- A landscape strategy has been prepared to provide greater clarity on the potential treatment of landscape features and public open space and how these areas could deliver biodiversity net gain for the Site. This includes a community orchard, woodland copse planting, open woodland planting, species rich hedgerows with long grass margins, species rich grassland, bat and bat boxes, log piles and wet meadow planting with attenuation basins.

Consultation responses related to landscape and visual matters

5. The table below sets out a summary of the consultation responses related to landscape and visual matters raised since January 2022. These points have been considered and a summary on how the Scheme Proposal has been adapted to address the comments (where relevant) has then been provided.

Table 1.1: Review of relevant consultation responses since January 2022¹

Consultation Response	Issue Raised	Landscape and Visual Response
Wiltshire Council Urban Design Officer dated ² 09.03.2022	• There are inconsistencies with the text in the DAS and the illustrative layout which result in insufficient space for tree-lined streets.	• the illustrative layout which demonstrates how 70 dwellings could be provided within the scheme parameters shows an amended street hierarchy. The primary street provides a grass verge to both sides of the carriageway allowing for tree lined streets in accordance with NPPF para XX. The park edge (tertiary

¹ Earlier comments were responded to in the submitted Landscape and Visual Technical Note dated January 2022.

² Refer to DAS Addendum (July 2023) by Turley Design for the response to comments raised on design matters.

Consultation Response	Issue Raised	Landscape and Visual Response
North Bradley Parish Council dated 8 March 2022	• The Neighbourhood Plan states that the Landscape Setting Gap between North Bradley and Trowbridge must not be compromised, nor the rural setting of North Bradley harmed. The Gap also serves to preserve biodiversity and prevent harm to the protected bats of the Bath and Bradford on Avon SAC. A wider landscape gap should be provided between the development and Woodmarsh in the interests of preserving the rural setting and identity of the village, the amenity of residents and the preservation of an effective “dark corridor” for foraging bats. • The layout sketch depicts a new village somewhere between Trowbridge and North Bradley but without any identity of its own. It needs to have clear links to Trowbridge or at least the White Horse Business Park. It should have a small central green space to give it a feel of the community as set out in the National Design Guide.	streets) have been widened to allow for appropriate offsets from retained hedgerows and space for additional planting. These measures would contribute positively to the character of the development and break up areas of built development. • The Site is not located within the Landscape Setting Gap identified in the North Bradley Neighbourhood Plan and Policy 1 cannot apply to the Site as it is not within the designated area. The revised scheme incorporates a significantly wider gap with the developable area contained within the existing hedgerow structure. The dark corridors for bats have also been increased in width. The increased separation between the development and Woodmarsh would further reduce the impacts on the landscape setting of North Bradley with clear visual and physical separation between the settlement areas. The field adjacent to Woodmarsh has been left free from development and will be used for public open space and strengthening wildlife corridors. • The revised illustrative layout and parameter plan places the developable area closer to the White Horse Business Park. The proposed cycle and pedestrian access to the Site would connect with the Elm Grove Farm development to the north. A clear break between development within Trowbridge (inclusive of the White Horse Business Park) and North Bradley would be provided as experienced along the A363 and Woodmarsh which would maintain the sense of visual and physical separation between these areas of settlement. Houses to the north of the

Consultation Response	Issue Raised	Landscape and Visual Response
		development would front on to an open providing green space at the entrance to the development.
Trowbridge Town Council dated 9 March 2022	This development is in contravention of WHSAP Policy H2.2: "Development will be expected to enhance a key gateway approach to the town and retain visual separation between the town and North Bradley." It fails completely to be planned to be either a part of the town or a part of the village of North Bradley but to all intents and purposes has simply been plonked in the middle of fields between the town and the village, with green space on all aspects, resulting in an extremely poor layout and design which fails to recognise its importance in protecting the coalescence of the town and the village, but also fails to link in to the development at White Horse Business Park and fails to recognise that development of the field to the north has so far not come forward.	The revised layout has moved the developable area closer to the White Horse Business Park and increase the open gap between North Bradley and development within Trowbridge. The visual and physical sense of leaving Trowbridge and arriving into North Bradley would be experienced along Woodmarsh with the scheme proposal set further away from North Bradley. The development would connect with the White Horse Business Park and the Elm Grove development with pedestrian and cycle links leading into the centre of Trowbridge. The development would front on to an area of public open space. Whilst the detail of this area would be confirmed at reserved matters, the landscape strategy suggests a community orchard and attenuation basin with meadow grassland and tree planting to provide visual interest.
David Feather's comment dated 20.02.2022 (Ref: WC-22-02-226800)	- The proposals could be disjointed and lack identity and should be reviewed against NPPF requirements for well-designed places (Chapter 12, para 126) and the National Design Guide guidance around Destinations (B3, para 72). - Non-compliance with North Bradley Neighbourhood Plan landscape gap policy and comments relating to the	- The comments relating to materials and the characteristics of built form would be addressed through a reserved matters application. The developable area has been reduced in size and contained within the existing hedgerow structure. This would increase the perceived separation between North Bradley and the new development within Trowbridge. The front onto the A363 and further planned development to the north. - The Site is not located within the Landscape Setting Gap identified in the

Consultation Response	Issue Raised	Landscape and Visual Response
	provision of substantial woodland for bat mitigation.	North Bradley Neighbourhood Plan and Policy 1 cannot apply to the Site as it is not within the designated area. Nevertheless, the width of the gap between residential properties in North Bradley and the proposed development has been increased and is a minimum of 160m. Whilst the detailed landscape design would be confirmed at reserved matters, the scheme has evolved to maximise dark corridors for bats and provide a range of habitats and landscape features. Woodland planting is included within the landscape strategy. However, based on previous feedback it was understood a more open character to the landscape was the preference as opposed to dense woodland.
Karin Elder's comment (Ref: WC-22-03-228523) dated 08.03.2022	- A wider landscape gap should be provided between the development and Woodmarsh in the interest of preserving the rural setting and identity of the village, the amenity of residents and the preservation of an effective dark corridor for foraging bats. - The layout sketch depicts a new village somewhere between Trowbridge and North Bradley but without any identity of its own. It needs to have clear links to Trowbridge or at least the White Horse Business Park. It should have a small central green space to give it a feel of the community as set out in the National Design Guide.	See comments in response to North Bradley Parish Council.
Mr K J McCall's comment (Ref: WC-22-03-	The 'triangular' shaped area of housing shown on Turley's drawing no. 4005 Rev. 1 between the Woodmarsh rear	The area of development to the southwest of the central hedgerow has been removed in the revised scheme proposals. A masterplan document for

Consultation Response	Issue Raised	Landscape and Visual Response
229153) dated 15.03.22	gardens and the existing central row of trees and hedge (item 5 on drawing) should be omitted and an integrated masterplan for site H2.2 should be produced before any more planning applications by developers are considered by Wiltshire Council.	the allocation site H2.2 is being prepared by Turley Design.

Conclusions of the LVIA

6. The conclusions of the LVIA submitted with the original planning application (Application reference: 20/03641/OUT) recognised there are no landscape designations covering the Site and it is not considered to form part of a valued landscape. The Site forms part of an allocated area for residential development. The consultation response from the Landscape Officer at Wiltshire Council agreed that the site is *'an undesignated, unremarkable landscape and not considered to be part of a valued landscape in the context of paragraph 170 [now para 174] of the NPPF'*.
7. The conclusions of the LVIA identified that the Scheme Proposal would introduce residential development into an area of rural landscape surrounding Trowbridge, changing the character of the landscape within the Application Site and some local views. However, effects on the wider landscape and more distant views would be limited. The proposed tree and hedgerow planting and new areas of open space would improve the recreational value of the landscape and enhance parts of the landscape structure. The identified magnitude of change and type of effect on landscape character at year 1 ranged from Medium and Adverse to Negligible. The identified long term (by year 15) effects on landscape character ranged from Medium-Low and Adverse to Negligible. The identified magnitude of change and type of effect on visual receptors at year 1 ranged from Medium and Adverse to Negligible and the long term magnitude of change and type of effect ranged from Medium-Low and Adverse to Negligible.
8. The conclusions of the LVIA and previously identified overall range of effects would remain valid for the revised Scheme Proposal. However, due to the reduction in developable area in the revised scheme, with more of the Site kept free from development, there would be some localised changes. This particularly relates to the magnitude of change experienced by some visual receptors reducing because the revised scheme would become less visible from the surrounding landscape and the space within the Site for the strengthening of landscape features that would contribute positively to views would also increase.
9. The consultation response from the Landscape Officer at Wiltshire (dated 15.10.20) recognised that *'as an allocated housing site, the Council accepts that there will be a permanent change in character from rural to urban to meet local needs'*.

10. It went on to say that *‘overall I agree with the judgements and conclusions of the LVA. I do consider that the assessment is robust and appropriate to inform a planning decision. The predicted landscape and visual effects will be experienced at a local level on the site and its immediate environs and are not considered to have any significant adverse residual effects. The current proposal retains and enhances the existing vegetation structure where possible and will provide a new quantum of green infrastructure that will be accessible to residents’.*
11. It is considered that the revised Scheme Proposals and the additional clarity that has been provided through the preparation of the landscape strategy provides greater assurance on the proposed retention and enhancements to the landscape structure. The increased separation between the developable area and North Bradley would reinforce the perceived separation between settlement areas and demonstrates that the required 10% net gain in biodiversity can be achieved on Site. The arrangement of built form within the Site has been designed to minimise effects on the setting of North Bradley and build on the existing landscape structure to preserve key characteristics of the landscape and important ecological corridors. The revised Scheme Proposals would reinforce this approach.
12. To assist in the interpretation of the revised Scheme Proposals and how these relate to landscape and visual matters, commentary has been provided in red in the summary tables that formed part of the previously submitted LVIA.

Table 1: Summary of effects on landscape character receptors

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change / Type of Effect Year 1	Magnitude of change / Type of Effect Year 15
LCA: E3 North Bradley Rolling Clay Lowland	Medium	Low / Adverse No change to previous identified assessment	Low / Adverse No change to previous identified assessment
LLCA1 – Trowbridge Lowland Farmland	Medium-Low	Medium / Adverse No change to previous identified assessment	Medium-Low / Adverse No change to previous identified assessment
LLCA2 – White Horse Business Park	Low	Negligible	Negligible
LLCA3 – North Bradley Village	Medium-Low	Low / Adverse No change to previous identified assessment	Low / Adverse Due to the increase in the extent of open landscape between North Bradley and the proposed developable area, following the establishment of the landscape strategy, the magnitude of change would reduce to Very Low.

LLCA4 – Trowbridge Urban Centre	Low	Very Low / Adverse No change to previous identified assessment	Very Low / Adverse No change to previous identified assessment
Trees and hedgerows	Medium	Low / Adverse No change to previous identified assessment	Low / Beneficial Due to the increase in buffers to existing retained vegetation, the increase in the scale of the area within the Site identified for green infrastructure the magnitude of change would increase to Medium-Low .

Table 1.2: Assessment of Effects on Visual Receptors

Receptor and representative viewpoint (RV)	Sensitivity	Year 1 Magnitude of change / Effect	Year 15 Magnitude of change / Effect
Residents of properties on the eastern side of Woodmarsh and Woodmarsh Farm Cottage	Medium	Varying between Medium (properties with little garden vegetation) and Low (mature vegetation filters views) / Adverse Due to the increase in the gap between existing residential properties and the proposed developable area, the magnitude of change for properties the highest potential visibility would reduce to Medium-Low. The proposed houses would be set behind open space and the retained hedgerow structure and as a result would be less visible.	Varying between Low (properties with little garden vegetation) and Negligible (mature vegetation filters views) / Adverse By year 15 following the establishment of landscape proposals, the magnitude of change would reduce to Very Low . The landscape proposals would be subject to detailed design at reserved matters, however, open woodland planting and meadow grassland would retain an open aspect to views whilst providing increased containment to the proposed development.
Pedestrians and road users on Woodmarsh RVs 2a and 2b	Medium-Low	Varying between Low (breaks in vegetation allow views into Site) and Negligible (views obscured by residential properties and mature vegetation) / Adverse RV 2a: Very Low / Adverse RV 2b: Low / Adverse	Varying between Very Low (breaks in vegetation allow views into Site) and Negligible (views obscured by residential properties and mature vegetation) / Adverse or Neutral RV 2a: Negligible RV 2b: Very Low / Neutral

		The increase in the offset of the developable area from Woodmarsh would reduce the visibility of the scheme in views experienced by road users and pedestrians. The cumulative presence of retained hedgerows and proposed open space would limit views of the proposed development with the overall character of views experienced within North Bradley maintained. The magnitude of change where the scheme is visible in glimpsed views would reduce to Very Low.	Following the establishment of the landscape strategy, including the proposed green corridors to the west of the Site, views of the scheme would be further reduced. The magnitude of change would reduce to Negligible by year 15.
Pedestrians and road users on Bradley Road / A363 RVs 1 and 3	Medium-Low	Varying between Medium (where road runs adjacent to care home/entrance road) to Very Low (stretch of the road within Trowbridge) / Adverse RV 1: Medium / Adverse RV 3: Medium / Adverse The influence of built form would decrease due to the removal of the care home. This is considered a positive change, due to the resultant increased space for ecological and landscape enhancements including the potential provision of a community orchard to the north of the Site. Built form would continue to be visible fronting onto proposed open space but would be set further back from the road. The magnitude of change as the road runs adjacent to the Site would reduce to Medium-Low.	Varying between Medium-Low (where road runs adjacent to care home/entrance road) to Negligible (stretch of the road within Trowbridge) / Adverse or Neutral RV 1: Medium-Low / Neutral RV 3: Medium / Neutral Once established, planting within open space to the north of the Site would soften views of proposed built form. The magnitude of change as the road runs adjacent to the Site would reduce to Low.
Players and spectators at Trowbridge Town Football Club grounds	Low	Low / Adverse The visibility of the developable area would further decrease due to the increase in green infrastructure to the western side of the Site. The magnitude of change would reduce to Very Low.	Very Low / Neutral Following the establishment of planting within green corridors to the west of the Site, the magnitude of change would reduce to Negligible.

Walkers and horse riders on Bridleway ref: NBRA3 / Axe and Cleaver Lane RV 4	Medium	Negligible RV 4: Negligible No change to previous identified assessment.	Negligible RV 4: Negligible No change to previous identified assessment.
Employees at the White Horse Business Park	Low	Negligible No change to previous identified assessment.	Negligible No change to previous identified assessment.
Residents of properties on the southern edge of Trowbridge	Medium	Varying between Very Low Adverse and Negligible (depending on the presence on mature boundary vegetation) Due to the removal of the care home and set back of the developable area, the magnitude of change would reduce to Negligible .	Varying between Very Low Neutral and Negligible (depending on the presence on mature boundary vegetation) Due to the removal of the care home and set back of the developable area, the magnitude of change would reduce to Negligible .
Walkers using public footpath ref: NBRA7 RV 5	High-Medium	Varying between Medium (to north eastern end of footpath) to Negligible (south western end of footpath where views obscured by built form/mature trees) / Adverse RV 5: Medium Adverse No change to previous identified assessment.	Varying between Medium-Low (to north eastern end of footpath) to Negligible (south western end of footpath where views obscured by built form/mature trees) / Adverse RV 5: Medium-Low Adverse No change to previous identified assessment.
Pedestrians and road users on Little Common RV 6	Medium	Varying between Medium (to north eastern end of lane) to Negligible (south western end of lane where views obscured by built form/mature trees) / Adverse RV 6: Medium Adverse No change to previous identified assessment.	Varying between Medium-Low (to north eastern end of lane) to Negligible (south western end of lane where views obscured by built form/mature trees) / Adverse RV 6: Medium-Low Adverse No change to previous identified assessment.
Pedestrians and road users on Drynham Lane RV 7	Medium-Low	Varying between Low to Negligible / Adverse RV 7: Low / Adverse Due to the removal of the care home and set back of the developable area, the magnitude of change would reduce to Negligible .	Varying between Very Low to Negligible / Neutral RV 7: Very Low / Neutral Due to the removal of the care home and set back of the developable area, the magnitude of change would reduce to Negligible .

13. In summary, the proposed changes to the scheme are considered to respond appropriately to landscape and visual matters raised during the consultation period. The Scheme Proposal would continue to result in some adverse changes to the character of the Site and some local views but the magnitude of these changes for some receptors would reduce further. The effects on the wider landscape and more distant views would be limited. The revisions to the scheme would reinforce the positive aspects of the scheme resulting in increased improvements to landscape features and the wider green infrastructure network.

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